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THE
LANGUAGE BAR

The
LANGUAGE BAR

by
VICTOR GROVE
Ph.D.



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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
1. THE DILEMMA OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE	1
2. THE EMERGENCE OF THE LANGUAGE BAR	7
3. THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE	33
4. LANGUAGE AND SCIENCE	53
5. LANGUAGE AND POETRY	64
6. THE SOCIOLOGICAL ISSUE OF HIGH-BROW AND LOW-BROW	84
7. THE INDIVISIBILITY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE	97
8. THE REMOVAL OF THE LANGUAGE BAR	109
9. BEYOND THE LANGUAGE BAR	141
APPENDIX A	149
APPENDIX B	152
INDEX	154

CHAPTER ONE

THE DILEMMA OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

A language is like the shaft of a mine, for at the bottom of it there have been deposited all the fears, all the feelings, all the thoughts . . . of generations. It is a pile, an ancient hoard, whither every passer-by has brought his gold or silver or leather coin . . . where a whole race has worked, body and soul, for hundreds and thousands of years. A language is the revelation of actual life, the manifestation of human thought, the all-holy instrument of civilization, and the speaking testament of dead and living societies.

Mistral, Speech, 1877.

The modern civilized countries of the world have been passing through a phase of a steady growing sense of social and economic responsibility, and the tendency towards a rising standard of living, now almost an economic platitude, is even noticeable in countries somewhat removed from the trends of Western civilization. Gradually, however, these efforts of the nineteenth century and of the beginning of the twentieth have been supplemented by an urge to extend not only the outward benefits of the industrial age to a greater number of people but also the non-material resources of wealth, the treasures of knowledge, literature, and art. The vital importance of this task of our time has been recognized by unofficial and official authorities, but the realization of this lofty aim meets with even greater difficulties than a juster distribution of material wealth.

One of the difficulties which, because of its fundamental nature, is always in danger of being overlooked is that of language, the very source and mainspring of spiritual and intellectual life and vehicle of all enlightenment.

This book does not, however, attempt to survey the entire field of language and its rôle in the permeation of civilization, but selects the domain of the English language where a unique problem offers itself, where obstacles of a specific kind are obstructing the

which can only be alleviated, though never eliminated, by dictionaries.

The main impediment, however, to the process of acquiring the key to the granaries of knowledge and culture is to be found in the heterogeneous character of the English vocabulary, for English is not a pure language but a fascinating combination of tongues welded into a fresh unity. The following chapter will give a brief outline of the unique historical development of English, and expound the reasons why Teutonic, Latin, French, and Greek elements went into the making of this Proteus among European languages ; and the third chapter will show how the almost cosmopolitan character of English must result in a complexity making considerable demands upon the powers of penetration. French, Spanish, and Italian are Romance languages, whose roots are mainly derived from Latin words ; Swedish, Danish, and German are chiefly built up on Germanic roots, forming groups and families of words which unify and simplify the vocabulary, and with it the corresponding mental processes. English, however, is a fusion of both root sources, enlarged by a very considerable number of Greek elements. This abundance makes for diversity and complexity demanding greater mental capacity, resilience, and intellectual power, if the same unification is to be achieved. Words are not merely names of things, labels attached to objects, conceptions, and notions ; they must have an inner meaning if they are to possess real significance, they must have palpable roots, that is to say, something that leads deep down into the unconscious layers of the mind ready to produce a response. As the root of a plant or tree is hidden in the earth, not apparent to the eye, so the root of a word is not necessarily " visible " to the mind or consciously perceived, but nevertheless forms a channel through which life flows. If the root of a word is no longer functioning in this manner, the whole word becomes a lifeless, bloodless, ossified, and sometimes petrified, growth. It is no longer a symbol or image, but a mere denomination. In purely Romance or Germanic languages the roots are alive—consciously or subconsciously—but in English many roots, mainly of Latin, Greek, and French derivation, are not alive to the majority of the people who have no Latin, Greek, or French. They are not self-explanatory and therefore considered difficult, but as these " difficult " words are being

constantly used by the educated and literary section of the nation, whose linguistic training makes them alive, a language barrier is erected, which renders it difficult for the majority of the people adequately to benefit and to enjoy the heritage of their own civilization.

A full exposition of this dilemma of the English language, and of its consequences, will be given in Chapter Three, but a few words chosen at random, such as *cortex*, *tripod*, *hippopotamus*, *pyre*, *emetic*, and *zodiac* will suffice to illustrate the problem in a general way. To a Dutchman the Latin word *cortex*, which means bark, will offer no difficulty, because the word was not adopted in its Latin garb, but was transplanted and given a Dutch substance: *schors*, meaning bark, rind. This, however, is not an exception but the rule, for in German we find the word *Gehirnrinde*, which carries its own definition, because it means bark, or rind of brain, the outer layer of the brain. Also the Swedish word for cortex, which is *bark*—the English word "bark" was borrowed from the Scandinavian—demands no further definition for a Swedish mind. In such Romance languages as Spanish and Portuguese the words *cortezuela* and *cortica* automatically suggest the meaning of bark, whereas in English the radical or root idea has been lost, and the word has to be learned like a foreign expression. In Welsh, for instance, there are no less than fifteen words based on *rhisi gl*, the counterpart of the English word cortex, meaning bark, rind, or peel. In Czech *kura*, and in Hungarian *kereg*, both meaning bark, rind, or crust, convey the same direct meaning of cortex.

A comparison of the remaining words *tripod*, *hippopotamus*, *pyre*, *emetic*, and *zodiac*, with the corresponding words in Dutch, Czech, Swedish, Polish, Hungarian, Welsh, and German reveal the same position, that is to say, they all have words which are self-explanatory, just as the words three foot for *tripod*, river horse for *hippopotamus*, funeral pile or pile of logs for *pyre*, a vomitive for *emetic*, and animal circle for *zodiac* would be to an English speaking person. But as these words are actually based on foreign roots, they are "Greek" in every sense of the word to the Anglo-Saxon who has not studied the language of Aristotle and Homer. Some of the renderings of the Greek words in the languages referred to are quite original as, for example, *hroch*, the Czech word for hippopotamus, which imitates the snorting noises produced by the

monster and is based on the verb *hrochtati* to grunt or grumble. *Bål*, the Swedish word for pyre (from Greek *pura* a funeral pile, based on *pyr* fire) is identical with the Swedish word for body, a verbal symbolism which indicates that the corpse which is being burned on the pyre is being made identical with the pyre itself. Reminiscences of this old burial rite are preserved in the English word balefire, or pyre-fire. A charming rendering of the Greek word *zodiak* from *zodiakos* the zodiacal circle—so called because seven of the twelve constellations are represented by animals (from *zoon* animal, *zodion* small animal)—is the Polish *zwierzyniec niebieski* the heavenly garden of animals, from *zwierze* animal, *zwierzyniec* animal garden, and *niebieski* heavenly.

There is no doubt that the English-speaking peoples are faced with a language problem of their own, that they have to remove stumbling blocks before they can enter the Halls of Learning, where other nations can afford to rush in. Thus, it is not surprising that nationals of other countries after superficial acquaintance with the English are inclined to think that the average standard of civilization in Great Britain is lower than that in their homelands.

The reaction of the English person who has not had the good fortune of a higher school education, and for whom so many literary works are as many sealed books, finds its symptomatic and most characteristic expression in the term high-brow, which has no exact psychological and linguistic counterpart in other European languages. All these and additional problems, and their effect in the cultural, sociological, and educational spheres, will be expounded and discussed in the following pages, and a solution will be attempted in the penultimate chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

THE EMERGENCE OF THE LANGUAGE BAR

*Beside 'tis known he could speak Greek
as naturally as pigs squeak ;
that Latin was no more difficile
than to a blackbird 'tis to whistle.*

S. Butler, Hudibras.

At an early stage of English literature Latin became the rival of Anglo-Saxon or Old English, a natural development bound up with the spreading of Christianity. Since Latin was the universal language, it was possible to build the foundations of the Christian church with a speed and directness hardly feasible if the medium of national languages only had been used.

Thus, the Romanized Briton Gildas (c. 500-570), in his work *De Exidio Britanniae*, speaks of Latin as "our tongue". The great historian and ecclesiastic, Bede the Venerable (673-735), and Alcuin (745 ?-804), the British apostle of education in the empire of Charlemagne and head of the famous ecclesiastic school at York, became personalities of European renown, because they wrote their works in Latin.

The ninth century, however, yielded a very poor literary harvest, an indication that learning in England had fallen to a low level. The raids of the Scandinavians had produced conditions most unfavourable to study, to intellectual and spiritual refinement. Alfred the Great (849-901), the most outstanding figure of his own reign, was shocked by the low cultural standard of the nation, for he found that there were very few south of the Humber who understood the common prayers of the church or were capable of translating a single sentence of Latin into English. South of the Thames the position was even worse, and the king once expressed his doubt whether there was a single person there who possessed a moderate amount of learning. He realized, however, that it would take at least a generation to remedy this lamentable state of things and make people able to appreciate Latin texts in the original. He simply did

what had been done in the past : he made the Scriptures available in translation from Greek and Hebrew into Latin, and then from Latin into contemporary tongues. He himself began to translate Latin works into his own native Wessex, and inspired others to follow his royal example. It was his desire " that all the youth that are now in England, who are freemen, and possess sufficient wealth, may for a time apply to no other task till they first well know to read English. Let those learn Latin afterwards who will know more, and advance to a higher condition."

The desolation of learning in England was, however, too great to be followed by an age of erudition, in spite of the efforts of an enthusiast like Alfred, who devoted an eighth of his entire revenue to subsidize his seminaries for the sons of noblemen. Repeated raids of savage invaders jeopardized his work again and again.

Edgar (944-975), King of a united England, continued the struggle against the ignorance which must have still prevailed among the clergy, because Aethelwold (908 ?-984), Bishop of Winchester, deemed it necessary to translate the Benedictine rule into English for the benefit of the forty newly founded or restored monasteries, although he had already dealt with it and explained it in Latin.

The age of Alfred, and Ælfric (955 ?-1022), the great homilist, had substantially contributed to the evolution of Anglo-Saxon prose, when suddenly the rock of the Norman conquest blocked its course, and incidentally produced the collapse of Anglo-Saxon poetry. Only the popular ballad survived.

As the Yellow River of China, when swollen by an increase of water, seeks itself a new bed, so the Anglo-Saxon language, afflicted by the torrential influx of a new language, had to find itself a new course, a bed spacious enough to embrace both streams. The waters of the Baltic and North Sea had to be blended with the Mediterranean.

The year 1066 meant not only the victory of the archers of William the Conqueror, but also the sudden eclipse of Anglo-Saxon as the language of the ruling classes. Fortunately, both conquered and conquerors had a medium of approach that would serve as a neutral means of communication until a final decision was to be reached : Latin, in which all formal manuscripts were written. What the Conqueror and his barons did to the " body politic", Taillefer and other Norman minstrels did to the " body literary",

for it was Taillefer who, at the battle of Hastings, inspired the Normans to deeds of great valour by his singing of the *Song of Roland*, and inaugurated a complete reorientation of literary conceptions. The *Chronicle*, however, remained the vehicle of the old native tradition.

The newcomers, who were the representatives of a more highly developed civilization, made good use of the fairly low cultural standard of the Saxon clergy. William seized his opportunity and turned their general illiteracy into a convenient political weapon. He deprived great numbers of them of their benefices, and appointed Normans in their stead.

The Conquest, however, did throw a bridge across the Channel, thus establishing immediate connexion with the continent of Europe. William, who "patronized and loved letters", did not hesitate to fortify his rule by inviting a considerable number of scholars to cross this new bridge. He realized that his military conquest had to be followed up and stabilized by spiritual and intellectual domination. Lanfranc of Caen (1005-1089) was placed in the See of Canterbury, and he was succeeded by his pupil, the Norman metaphysician and theologian, Anselm (1033-1109). Herman became Bishop of Salisbury and founder of a fine library in that ancient cathedral town. Godfrey (d. 1107), a native of Cambrai, was made Prior of St. Swithin's at Winchester, and achieved fame as an elegant epigrammatist in Latin, and the poet Gower frequently referred to him as the British Martial. Geoffrey (about 1110), another Norman, left the University of Paris to establish a famous school at Dunstable.

The twelfth century was an age of chronicles, and it was the Latin language that gave literary unity to works written by authors of different native tongues, Anglo-Saxon and Norman French. They were a fine galaxy of writers with stars like William of Malmesbury (d. 1143), Geoffrey of Monmouth (1100-1154), the "Father of English Fiction", and the greatest of all, Matthew Paris, monk of St. Albans, who died in 1259. Henry of Huntington (1084-1155), archdeacon and historian, began his literary career as the author of eight books of epigrams, eight more of love poems, and three long didactic poems on herbs, spices, and precious stones: all written in Latin.

These outstanding Latin chroniclers of English history and

English tradition helped considerably to build up consistent patriotic sentiment in a country whose national language had not yet been born. The welding of the two distinct national layers of England was also assisted by a number of eminent English scholars who had studied in Paris, that most illustrious seat of learning in Europe. John of Salisbury (d. 1182), whose Latin was not only correct but of classical elegance, sat at the feet of the brilliant Abelard (1079-1142). "Whatever fell from his lips I took up with all the avidity of my mind," he wrote in *Metalogicus*, touching upon his studies in Paris. Those words were, of course, spoken in Latin.

The famous Walter Mapes (1137-1209), the genial Archdeacon of Oxford, who is supposed to have written the famous drinking song *Meum est propositum in taberna mori*, and another brilliant Welshman and great Latin author of his time, Gerald of Barry (1146 ?-1220 ?), as well as Michael Scot (d. 1236), who knew Arabic and became an almost legendary figure, were all products of Paris. They made closer than ever the contact between the French and their own native civilization.

Even the common people, who could not speak or read Latin, recognized it as a living tongue. It had a familiar sound to their ears. This may explain the curious fact that Giraldus Cambrensis (Gerald of Barry), one of the founders of the University of Cambridge, who assisted Archbishop Baldwin in a preaching crusade for the liberation of the Holy Land (1188), was always most successful when he delivered his sermon in Latin. The people were moved to tears, and took the cross in crowds, in spite of the fact—so Giraldus informs us—that they did not understand a word of what he had said. Giraldus wrote a number of works in Latin not including the contemplated history of the crusade, for which he had won three thousand recruits. This he did not write because he changed his mind and stayed at home.

The Latin and Continental influence was further enhanced by the Dominicans, or Black Friars, who had established themselves at Oxford in 1221, and at Cambridge in 1274, and the Franciscans, or Grey Friars, who had invaded the two universities in 1224. The two orders soon dominated these great seats of learning, and produced eminent men like John Duns Scotus (1265 ?-1308 ?), and Roger Bacon (1214-1294), the Dr. Mirabilis, who studied Aristotle

and condemned the practice of using the wretched Latin translations of his works as utterly inadequate and misleading.

Under the constant impact of Latin and Norman French upon the native language, fundamental and far-reaching changes were bound to occur. Between 1150 and 1250 inflections began to disappear, the spoken words underwent modifications, and the influence of the French scribes became so powerful that the style of writing was adapted to the Latin script.

The popular tongue, however, though in great danger of extinction, was merely submerged. It lived its own life, and its literary creations, though until the end of the twelfth century they were not considered worth recording, passed from brain to brain, from mouth to mouth, in a living stream. After all, the native tongue was the language of a subject people.

In the thirteenth century the stream became a river and a clear manifestation of a genuine life of native poetry. Most characteristic of early transition English and its hybrid character is the work of the Worcestershire priest and poet Layamon (i.e. Lawman), who most strikingly combines Anglo-Saxon and French features, for it seems likely that he tried to attract both Norman and Anglo-Saxon readers. His *Chronicle* or *Brut* of 16,000 long lines, based on Wace's French adaptation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, contains less than forty Norse words, and the *Ancrene Riwe*, or *Ancrene Wisse*, the rule of anchoresses or nuns, contains an even higher percentage of French words than the *Brut*. Layamon's enormous work, penned at the end of the twelfth, or in the beginning of the thirteenth century, is also unique, because it is the great English contribution to that inter-European body of fact and fiction known as the Arthurian legend. So far the British Arthur had been celebrated in Welsh, or Latin, or French. Thus, for instance, Marie de France (c. 1175), the first great poetess in English literature, had written her contribution to Celtic romance in French.

In the fourteenth century, however, a mysterious revival of alliterative English verse occurred. Some of its characteristic products are *William and the Were Wolf*, *Morte Arthur*, the story of *Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knight*, that "jewel of medieval romance". These works are evidence of a strong undercurrent of an old native tradition, though it was not powerful enough to

influence the main trend of English literature, and contain such a number of French words as sometimes almost to oust the native element. The fresh and natural spring of thirteenth-century lyric poetry is another witness to a living tradition that flourished in spite of the rivalry of Latin and Norman French works.

The middle and lower classes, who could only read their own tongue but did not want to be left out, created an ever-increasing demand for translations from Latin and Norman French. The author of *Cursor Mundi* (early fourteenth century) was apparently aware of this potential section of the reading public, for he wrote his poem of 24,000 lines, in honour of the Virgin, for the benefit of those who "na French can", though he hoped that his readers would understand the meaning of such Norman words as *aunt*, *bachelor*, *friar*, *master*, *mayor*, *merchant*, *mariner*, *messenger*, *nation*, *nephew*, *official*, *page*, *parson*, *person*, *pilgrim*, *prince*, *people*, *squire*, *liquor*, *dinner*, and *supper*.

His example was followed by a number of writers, which proves the success of the new venture. There was, above all, Robert Manning of Brunne who, however, excused himself for the use of English in his *Handlyng Synne* (c. 1303), a translation of the French *Manuel des Pêcheurs*, saying that :

" For lewde (i.e. uneducated) men y undyrtoke
on englyssh tunge to make thys boke."

This humble statement cannot be fully appreciated unless we read it in the light of Robert of Gloucester's earlier dictum, made in 1298, that " people think little of a man who knows no French . . . that it is the best thing to know both languages ". The language pattern of the country must, indeed, have undergone some considerable changes since Guichard de Beaulieu, who composed a poetic sermon in nearly 2,000 French Alexandrine lines, and informed his hearers that he was not going to preach to them in Latin but in Romance, in order that all might understand him.

Yet Richard Rolle, of Hampole (1300 ?-1349 ?), the author of *The Form of Living*, wrote a number of his most influential works in Latin, and so did the Doctor Evangelicus, John Wyclif (1320-1384), though he spoke his native tongue when he wanted to appeal to the hearts of the people. It should, however, be borne in mind that this great English scholar and reformer failed to produce works in his own tongue. The first complete translation

of the Bible into English, generally attributed to him, may after all not be his work.

Another most powerful force working towards a fusion of the two contesting vocabularies was the exclusive use of French in courts of law. Besides, all charters of liberties were composed in Latin, as well as every statute down to 1275, the year of the First Statute of Westminster, under Edward I (1272-1307). It was written in Norman French, and passed "par le assentment de erseveskes (archbishops), eveskes, abbes, priurs, contes, barons et la communaute de la tere ileokos somons". After that they were drawn up mainly in Latin, some, however, in French. In the reign of Edward II (1307-1327) French became more frequent, and under Edward III (1327-1377) and Richard II (1377-1399) practically all statutes were formulated in French, and law treatises were written in Latin and French. Thus, legal conceptions and technical terms, introduced and used over a period of three hundred years, had no counterpart in English, and when the Act of 1362 permitted the use of English in courts of law, because French was no longer understood by the average person, the law could not be adequately expressed in English. It was permissible to introduce and argue the case in English, but the pleadings had to be conducted in French. Thus the Anglo-French law language remained triumphant through sheer necessity, and since the contact of the people with the courts of law has always been an intimate one it is not surprising that a considerable number of originally French legal terms became incorporated in the everyday language of the citizen, such as : *justice, judge, jury, court, summons, fee, accuse, penalty, crime*, and many more.¹

To-day, better than ever before, we can observe the intrusion of foreign words into people's native tongues. In this present age of enforced mass migration and bilingualism we can study thousands of examples of language corruption, and it seems to be a psychological law that people do not corrupt the language they are compelled to learn but their own. The explanation of this phenomenon may lie in the fact that the speaking of the foreign language is more a conscious, intellectual effort than the use of one's mother tongue.

¹ Even Cromwell tried in vain to destroy that curious lingual mixture, often described as "Law French", which ruled supreme until 1731, the year it was abolished by an Act of Parliament.

This process of "corruption" must have started soon after the Norman conquest, and John of Salisbury remarked in 1298 that it was fashionable to interlard one's speech with French words. Unavoidable contact with the Court, its officials, officers, and staff, with the authorities, with the courts of law, with students and scholars, whose languages were Latin and French, produced a bilingual atmosphere that led to adoption or corruption of the language, and later on to adaptation or assimilation which, when it reached a sufficiently high percentage of borrowed words, resulted in a fusion of Romance and Anglo-Saxon elements. The product of this gradual and protracted process of "lingual osmosis" was the English language.

The clearest indication of the ascendancy of English over French was the opening in English of the three parliaments between 1362 and 1364; but the most radical, the final, triumph over the language of the conqueror had been the abolition of French as the medium of instruction in schools. Until then, according to Ranulf Higden, who died in 1364: "school-children, contrary to the usage of other nations, are compelled to leave their own tongue and to construe their lessons and things in French, and have done so since the Normans came first into England." John Trevisa (1326-1412) confirms this in a note in which he says that French was used in English schools until 1349 when a most vital change took place, and English was substituted for French as the language of instruction. The instigator of this revolutionary step was John Cornwaile. Now, at last, Trevisa exclaims: "In all the Grammar schools of England, children have abandoned French and construe and learn English . . . and know no more French than their left heel."

The translations of Trevisa are also symptomatic of a change in the language pattern and indicate that the number of educated persons who could read French works in the original was dwindling. A work like Higden's *Polychronicon* (1350), a generation after its original publication, could only hope to attract a sufficiently large number of readers in Trevisa's English translation of 1387. The demand for English translations must have been great indeed, for *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* exist in three hundred manuscripts. This and other translations, mark the beginning of a popular English prose.

The work of the poet John Gower (1325-1408) is perhaps the most perfect illustration of the language dilemma of a fourteenth-century writer. No less than three languages were at his disposal: Latin, French, and English. "Moral Gower" cut the Gordian knot by writing in all three of them. The head of Gower's effigy, in Southwark Cathedral, is supported by three volumes, the poet's main works: the French poem of 30,000 lines, *Mirour de l'Omme*, which only exists in one copy, discovered in 1895; the Latin poem of about 10,000 lines, *Vox Clamantis* (c. 1382), and the English poem of 34,000 lines, *Confessio Amantis* (c. 1390). Thus, he began to write in English only in the last decade of the century, and even then he looked upon it as a bold step, a patriotic achievement for in the prologue to the *Confessio* we read:

"And for that few men endite (write literature)
in oure english, I thenke make
a bok for Engelondes sake."

The quality and standard of his English and the purity of his English style show that French had been ousted from its former predominant position, but it was the great Chaucer (1340 ?-1400) who made English into a perfect instrument of literary expression. The accusation that he was responsible for the Frenchifying of his mother tongue is no longer tenable in the light of modern literary criticism. William Langland, for instance, the author of *Piers Plowman*, who is often looked upon as a typical Anglo-Saxon writer, uses a higher percentage of Latin and Romance words than Chaucer, and so does Lydgate (c. 1370-1450). He truly is, as Spenser put it, the "well of English undefyled". We do, however, owe to him words like *attention*, *diffusion*, *fraction*, *duration*, *position*, and others. The fact that his technique follows the established tradition of French poetry, that a great deal of Italian influence is apparent in his work, does not reduce by a single inch the stature of the Father of our literature and "fyrste fyndere of our faire language".

This change of attitude even affected the Court. Richard II's queen, Anne of Bohemia, "an alien born," knew English. Henry IV, who ascended the throne in 1399, was the first English sovereign since the Conquest who spoke English as his mother tongue. He thanked Parliament in English, and the Chief Justice, when he

announced the deposition of Richard II, availed himself of his native language.

In spite of the ever growing ascendancy of English as a vehicle of communication, in spite of the fact that the House of Commons debated in English, in spite of the fact that even servants and women were learning to read and write it, English was not yet supreme in the fifteenth century. One-fourth only of the chronicles were written in English, for the main body of chroniclers maintained the Latin tradition. John Capgrave (1393-1464), the most widely read writer of his period, composed practically all his works in Latin, and so did John Forestcue (1394-1476 ?) who, with Reginald Pecock (1395 ?-1460), did a great deal to introduce reasonableness and rationality into English prose. As it was Pecock's greatest difficulty to adjust himself to the poor vocabulary of his readers, many Latin words that spontaneously came to his mind had to be discarded and replaced by English terms. Thus quite a number of now current English words are first to be found in Pecock's writings.

The fifteenth century, which saw the introduction of printing in England by William Caxton (1422 ?-1491), was an age of translators headed by Caxton himself, and most of these translators adopted a number of words from their Latin and French originals. Printing was, of course, a most powerful agent in the development of the English language, because it helped to spread the New Learning with greater rapidity, and it also became the condition for greater lingual permanency.

The classical Renaissance, which originated in Italy, spread across the Continent, and through France reached England, seriously impeded the development of English. Greek and Latin were fostered more enthusiastically than ever before, and it was a matter of course that the members of the new cosmopolitan republic should rely on Latin as their means of communication. They were inclined to treat the native tongue disparagingly, and declare it to be unfit for the expression of intellectual and emotional complexities.

Thus John Skelton (1460 ?-1529), who was made Poet Laureate at Oxford before 1490, and wrote English poetry of almost impudent freedom and vivacity, composed Latin verses of great purity and in true classical spirit. Skelton, now famous for his satirical verse,

was looked upon, in his own day, as a scholar of European renown whom the great Erasmus had styled *Britannicarum literarum decus et lumen* (the ornament and light of English letters). Thomas More (1478-1535), the first layman who, in succession to Wolsey, held the office of Lord Chancellor, wrote his most famous book, the *Utopia*, in Latin, and demanded that his children should write their letters to him in the language of Cicero. Yet at the same time this imitator of the classics was one of the pioneers of vivid and idiomatic English.

Erasmus (1466-1536), who had revised More's *Utopia*, opened the minds of the scholars to the world of the classics, and Sir Thomas Elyot (1490?-1546) did the same for the vast majority of people who had no Latin and Greek. Yet it was Elyot who suggested that a child should begin to learn Greek at the age of seven, and "in the mean time use the Latin tongue as a familiar language". At the "mature age" of thirteen the pupil is supposed to have assimilated the works of Aristophanes, Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Silvius, Lucan, and Hesiod. Dr. Thomas Wilson (d. 1581), though he was steeped in classical learning and tradition, denounced the habit of using French and Italian idiomatic phrases as "counterfeiting the kinges Englishe". "Some seek so far for an outlandish English," he complained, "that they forget altogether their mother language. And I dare swear this, if some of their mothers were alive, they were not able to tell what they say."

The fact that teachers had realized the necessity of cultivating and teaching the English language because of the continuous danger of "counterfeiting the kinges Englishe" very strikingly emerges from some letters written by the tutor of Gregory Cromwell, the son of that Cromwell who was Henry VIII's minister and successor to Cardinal Wolsey. Every day the tutor insisted on hearing young Cromwell read "somewhat in the English tongue, and advertising him of the natural and true kind of pronunciation thereof, expounding also and declaring the etymology and native signification of such words as we have borrowed of the Latins or Frenchmen, not even so commonly used in our quotidian speech".

Also religious life tended to strengthen the roots of the national language, for every Sunday, as well as on holy days, a chapter of the Bible had to be read in English. From 1544 the Latin Litany was superseded by that of Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556), the great

liturgist and immortal author of the *Book of Common Prayer*, which must be regarded as a definite step forward in the progress of the vernacular. Popular preachers, like John Longland (1473-1547) and the great Latimer (1485 ?-1555), who was burned at Oxford for his Protestant doctrines, adapted themselves to the linguistic needs of the people, and also William Tindale, who was burned at Vilvorde in 1536, adopted a popular style for his masterly though incomplete Bible translation. The first complete English Bible, translated by Miles Coverdale (1488-1568), was published in Zürich in 1535. It was his Great Bible (1539) that from 1540 was used in churches and was also read by the general public.

There were, however, eminent writers in the sixteenth century who strongly advocated the use of the Latin language. Such was the great Scottish humanist George Buchanan (1506-1582), who was convinced that the language of Rome was intended to become the literary language of Christendom, and he even translated the Psalms into Latin verse. He remained faithful to this conviction to his very last work, *Rerum Scotticarum Historia* (1582).

In contrast, however, to the chroniclers of the fifteenth century, those of the Tudor period wrote in English, though the most eminent of them, William Camden (1551-1623), penned his works principally in Latin. It is astonishing that Camden, who had said, "our English tongue is as fluent as the Latin, as courteous as the Spanish, as court-like as the French, and as amorous as the Italian," should have written in Latin. His most famous work *Britannia* (1586)—its sixth edition appeared in 1607—was translated into English by Philemon Holland (1552-1637) in 1610, and there are several translations of his *Annales* by others. At last it could be said that English was no longer despised or considered inferior to the classic tongues, not even by those who did not use it.

Panegyric praise, indeed, is bestowed upon the English language by the poet Richard Carew (1598 ?-1639 ?) in his work *The Excellency of the English Tongue* (1595-1596), when he writes : "Whatsoever grace any other language carries, in verse or prose, in tropes or metaphors, in echoes or agnominations, they may be lively and exactly represented in ours. Will you have Plato's vein, read Sir Thomas Smith ; the Ionic ? Sir Thomas More ; Cicero's ? Ascham ; Varro's ? Chaucer ; Demosthenes ? Sir John Cheeke (who in his treatise on rebels has comprised all figures of rhetoric).

Will you read Virgil? take the Earl of Surrey; Catullus? Shakespeare and Marlowe's fragment; Ovid? Daniel; Lucan? Spenser."

Many authors, however, were unable or unwilling to write "pure" English. Thus, the first Tudor chronicler, Edward Hall (d. 1547), was attacked for his habit of using "inkhorn terms", but there were others who tried to keep the influx of foreign words within reasonable bounds. George Gascoigne (1542?-1577), for instance, notable for his pioneer work in English literature, preferred to have "faulted in keeping the old English words", rather than "borrowing such epithets and adjectives as smell of the inkhorn".

Philip Sidney (1554-1586) also warns his readers against inkhorn terms "used by preachers and schoolmasters" and those employed by "secretaries and merchants and travellers", and Puttenham, one of the Cambridge purists, heartily condemns the many "dark words and not usual nor well sounding, though they be daily spoken in Court". Most eloquently scornful is perhaps Edward Kirke (1553-1613) in his *Epistle Prefatory* to Spenser's *Shepherd's Calender* (1579). He complains that people who look upon their mother tongue as both bare and barren would try to mend the fault by patching up "the holes with pieces of rags of other languages, borrowing here of the French, there of the Italian, everywhere of the Latin; not weighing how ill those tongues accord with themselves, but much worse with ours: so now that we have made our English tongue a gallimaufry, or hodge-podge of all other speeches".

In spite of these attacks, Latin remained the language of scholars, and even princes were steeped in classical learning. Henry VIII was a scholar of considerable pretensions, Erasmus praised the Latin letters of Henry's daughter Mary (1553-1558), and we still have some Latin epistles of Lady Jane Grey, Queen of England (1553) for nine days. She studied Plato, and read in a Greek Testament during the night before her execution. Queen Elizabeth, so her tutor Roger Ascham informs us, not only knew Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian, but was also most proficient in Greek, "in which language she used to read more every day than some prebendaries of the church read of Latin in a whole week." She also availed herself of the services of a Latin secretary, a post later on held by John Milton. In 1597, four years before her death,

she had sufficient command of Latin to put the Polonian ambassador in his place. It is not recorded whether he understood her Latin, but he seems to have grasped her meaning.

Though proficiency in Latin prose and verse was still the highest goal of teaching in the sixteenth century, some of its most eminent scholars tried to keep the English language free from further contamination. Men like Sir John Cheeke (1514-1557)—who demanded "that our own tongue should be written clean and pure, unmixed and unmangled"—Thomas Wilson, and Roger Ascham (1515-1568) realized the immense importance of the cultivation of the national language.

Yet the reading public of writers in English in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was small, very much smaller than to-day, not only because of the lesser number of inhabitants, but also because of the much smaller proportion of those who could read. The author who employed Latin addressed himself to the readers of the entire Western world. The use of the national language was a sacrifice, almost a degradation. The patriotic fervour of a writer who availed himself of the "vulgar" tongue instead of Latin may be compared to that of an Irishman who uses Gaelic instead of English. Thus it is not surprising that authors who wrote in English generally apologized for doing so.

Even pioneers and champions of the English language like Roger Ascham in his famous book on archery, *Toxophilus* (1544), says "that it would have been both more profitable for his study, and also more honest for his name, to have written in another tongue. As for the Latin or Greek tongues", he continues, "everything is so excellently done in them, that none can do better. In the English tongue, contrary, everything in a manner so meanly both for the matter and handling, that no man can do worse. For therein the least learned, for the most part, have been always most ready to write. And they which had least hope in Latin have been most bold in English; when surely every man that is most ready to talk, is not most able to write."

It was Richard Mulcaster (1530?-1611), headmaster of Merchant Taylors' School and of St. Paul's, and a truly modern teacher, who demanded with unique emphasis that a person's mind should be built up and trained in its own congenial medium of expression: the mother tongue. His creed is best expressed in his own words,

as written in a treatise published in 1582: "I love Rome, but London better; I favour Italy, but England more; I honour the Latin, but I worship the English." He pleads eloquently "to read that first which we speak first".

The Latin *Poemata* of Thomas Campion (1576-1620), however, show that Mulcaster's creed was not shared by everybody. It is true Campion is not remembered in English literature for his attempts in Latin, but they are symptomatic of the still prevalent language struggle of his period, as is his advocacy of the use of quantitative verse in English poetry, a tendency which like a subterranean stream again and again forced itself to the surface.

Like its forerunner, the sixteenth century also was an age of great translators, who set themselves the task of "conquering" cultural treasures for their own native land. Genuine translators are always a creative force in the making of a national language, and the Elizabethan age was blessed with quite a number of them. Translators like Thomas North (1535?-1601?) and the already mentioned Philemon Holland (1552-1637), "the Translateur Generall in his age," only to name the most outstanding adaptors of their time, left their mark on the English language.

Again and again writers on the English language have recorded with regret that the power of forming new words from native roots, by creation or derivation, had been lost or suspended. This is only true from the Anglo-Saxon point of view, and it is not due to any deficiency of the English language. It is a natural consequence of the mixed nature of the English vocabulary and of the fact that the superior cultural influences were not derived from Germanic but Romance—that is Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish—sources. The English translator did not feel Latin or French words as "foreign" elements. Thus, when the need for a new word arose, he struck the path of least resistance and adopted as well as adapted the original word in an Anglicized form. The coining of an Anglo-Saxon equivalent would have meant much greater efforts, because, after all, creation implies labour, not merely inspiration, and labour more often than not is accompanied by pain. Moreover, a Romance derivation in no way violated the spirit of the English language.

A most striking instance of the victorious development of English, as well as of the still prevalent power of Latin, is the fact

that some English works were considered worthy of translation into the language of Cicero. Sir Walter Raleigh's *Discovery of the Large, Rich and Beautiful Empire of Guiana* (1596) may serve as an example. On the other hand, the story of Sir Hugh Willoughby's *Voyage to Cathay* (1553) and many other outstanding works of travel were originally written in Latin and translated into English.

The most influential of all translations was, of course, that of the Bible. It became the impregnable fortress of the native language against the foreign intruders, and its influence was strengthened by popular preaching. The seventeenth century translation of the Bible, the *Authorized Version* of 1611—mainly Tindale's version—became one of the most formative forces in English life and language. It had to be "simple" and "Anglo-Saxon", because it was *the* book of the poor. Since the Bible was not burdened with a philosophical and scientific vocabulary, Anglo-Saxon was fairly adequate. The language of the Bible was concrete and picturesque, so was Anglo-Saxon, and the structure of its sentences was simple too. Thus no special effort was demanded of its translators to keep its language within the lingual range of the people. Had the Bible been the work of a more modern age the non-German roots in it would be much more numerous.

The Authorized Version was bound to become one of the main fountains of the cultural life of the seventeenth century because the Puritans had made it a law that the Bible should be publicly read and studied. Moreover, many words that might have been lost in the ever changing tide of literary fashion were preserved, because the Bible provided them with sanctuary and refuge. John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678-1679) would be unthinkable without the Bible, but he was certainly not the only author who modelled his sentences upon it, imitated its rhythm, and drew upon its great store of expressions.

Evidence of the important rôle played by Latin in the first half of the seventeenth century can be easily collected from the work of great contemporary writers. There is the most learned Robert Burton (1577-1640), whose *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) contains thousands of Latin tags, not to mention his Latin verses, and the cosmopolitan John Barclay (1582-1621), who attained international renown by his two Latin works *Euphormionis Saturicon* (1603) and *Argenis* (Paris, 1621, London, 1622), which ran into about fifty

editions and was translated into ten languages. Though Coleridge wished that *Argenis* should have been translated into "an heroic poem" in English epic blank verse, he exclaims: "Heaven forbid that this work should not exist in its present form and language!" John Owen (1563 ?-1622), the "British Martial", wrote Latin epigrams (1607) which exerted considerable influence, especially on German literature. Fynes Moryson's famous work, *Travels* (1617), one of the most important books on contemporary life in Europe, was originally written in Latin, and the "English Seneca", Joseph Hall (1574-1656), wrote his famous satire *Mundus Alter et Idem* (1605) in the language of ancient Rome.

At the same time, the English language was steadily gaining ground, and with Francis Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (1605) penetrated into the domain of philosophical expression. This book must be regarded as a pioneer work in "the advancement of English", though it was followed by his Latin treatises *De Sapientia Veterum* in 1609, and *Instauratio Magna (Novum Organum)* in 1620. He actually rewrote the *Advancement* in Latin "in order that it might live". The first outstanding English work of science, William Gilbert's (1540-1603) *De Magnete magneticisque corporibus* (1600), was written in Latin. Edward Herbert (1583-1648), the first English writer who attempted to explore the field of comparative religion in his book *De religione Gentilium*, published 1663, also wrote his main work *De Veritate* (1624) in the Latin tongue.

The fact, therefore, that English dramatists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries wrote their plays in English does not mean that Latin had lost all influence. After all, playwrights had to cater for everybody. Thomas May (1595-1650), secretary of the Long Parliament, author of *The History of the Parliament of England*, and writer of great versatility, merely seems to prove the rule, for he composed a play in Latin called *Julius Caesar*. There were, however, other dramatists who availed themselves of the idiom of Seneca, but their plays were intended for universities and royal visitors. Many were academic in character, others satirical, and their influence was negligible. Many of these Latin plays, written by university wits, never reached the printing stage.

John Selden (1574-1654) most bitterly complained of the complex texture of his mother tongue and described it as a motley garment. It was, he says: "as if a man had a cloak that he wore

plain in Queen Elizabeth's days, and since, here has put in a piece of red, and there a piece of blue, and here a piece of green, and there a piece of orange-tawny. We borrow words from the French, Italian, Latin, as every pedantic man pleases." Selden apparently but wrongly looked upon Elizabethan English as a plain garment. Elizabethan writers were keenly aware of the basically mixed character of their medium and made full use of it, in fact they were much nearer to the Latin meaning of words than is the modern English writer. An example quoted by G. H. McKnight from *The Tempest*, I, ii, shows this very clearly :

" The direful spectacle of the wreck, which touched
the very *virtue* of *compassion* in thee,
I have with such *provision* in mine art
so safely ordered, that there is no soul—
no, not so much *perdition* as an hair
betid to any creature in the vessel."

In this passage *virtue* stands for *strength*, *compassion* for *sympathy*, *provision* for *foresight*, and *perdition* for *loss*, and there is a typical bilingual pun in *As You Like It*, made by Touchstone : " I am here with thee and thy goats, as the most capricious poet, honest Ovid was, among the Goths." The Elizabethans appreciated the play on the words goats and Goths as we do, but they were also aware of Shakespeare's allusion to *caper* (Latin for goat) in capricious. Could there be a clearer indication of the almost bilingual character of Elizabethan English than is to be found in another scene from *As You Like It*, the well-known conversation between Touchstone and the rustic ? " Therefore, you Clown, abandon—which is in the vulgar leave, the society—which in the boorish is company—of this female—which in the common is woman ; which together is, abandon the society of this female, or Clown, thou perishest ; or, to thy better understanding, diest."

Shakespeare's contemporary, Ben Jonson (1572 ?-1637), according to Dryden, " did a little too much Romanize our tongue, leaving the words which he translated almost as much Latin as he found them : wherein though he learnedly followed their language, he did not enough comply with the idiom of ours." An analysis of *The English Grammar. Made by Ben Jonson. For the benefit of all Strangers, out of his observation of the English Language now spoken, and in use* seems to justify Dryden's criticism, for in this

little known work he slavishly follows the precepts of Latin grammar, and even bases examples of English usage upon it. Thus, many of his analogies are bound to be forced and artificially constructed.

Down to 1660 no evidence can be found in the curricula of grammar schools that English was given the standing of a separate subject, and Henry Peacham (1576-1643 ?) was not exaggerating when he complained of the deplorable neglect of the mother tongue in his *Compleat Gentleman* (1622). "I have known even excellent scholars," he says, "so defective this way that when they have been beating their brains thirty or four and twenty years about Greek etymologies . . . could neither write true English nor true orthography."

In those days Latin, the language of learning, also had its practical side. Travellers, for instance, were advised to acquire a working knowledge of colloquial Latin before they crossed the Channel to explore the continent of Europe. Special books were compiled to provide for this contingency.

John Milton (1608-1674) most certainly did not experience any difficulties in that direction when he went abroad to see the world and to establish personal contact with the leading lights of the Continent. Milton is perhaps the most amazing case of the power of the Latin tongue over a great English poet and writer. In fact, to do full justice to his work we must appreciate him as a bilingual author, for Latin to him was almost a second native language. When we read his early Latin poem and prose essays the often raised charge of youthful sterility cannot be upheld. His Latin poem *Ad Patrem* is important, and his Latin elegy *Epitaphium Damonis* is a forerunner of its greater English twin brother *Lycidas* (1638). Milton himself clearly indicated the importance he attributed to his Latin work in the title of the volume published in 1645 which reads: *Poems of Mr. John Milton, both English and Latin*. His Latin prose works are numerous and cannot be divorced from his *omnia opera* without distorting the outline of his literary personality or rendering it incomplete. Milton also held the office of Latin Secretary, and the official title he acquired in 1649 was: Secretary for Foreign Tongues to the Joint Committee for the Two Kingdoms. It is hardly surprising that Latin should have left some definite traces in the Latin Secretary's English writings, and his

voluminous biographer, Professor David Masson (1822-1907), had little difficulty in finding "that the highly disciplined syntax which Milton favoured from the first, and to which he tended more and more, was in fact, the classical syntax, or, to be more exact, an adaptation of the syntax of the Latin tongue". In 1669 Milton also composed a Latin *Accedence Commenced Grammar* "with sufficient rules" for pupils who wanted to learn Latin "without more trouble than needs". In this he followed the example of that prolific playwright and master of St. Albans Grammar School, James Shirley (1596-1666), who had written *The Way made Plain to the Latin Tongue* (1649). Shirley also wrote another textbook called *Manductio, or a Leading of Children by the Hand through the Principles of Grammar*, six years before his death, which was caused by severe shock and exposure during the Great Fire of London.

Milton's contemporary, the poet Abraham Cowley (1618-1667), who was styled "the English Virgil", was steeped in classical poetry, particularly Horace and Pindar. He wrote a comedy in Latin entitled *Naufragium Jocularé* (1640), and with his *Pindarique Odes* he introduced a fashion that was followed by John Dryden and other poets.

There can be no doubt that people in the seventeenth century were still Latin-minded, for the language of Cicero was the vehicle of diplomatic discussion and arbitration, written as well as spoken. The importance of Greek, however, was realized more clearly than ever before, and the effect of this recognition can be found in the contemporary English vocabulary. John Milton's elder nephew, Edward Phillips (1630-1696?), in his widely read philological dictionary *New World of English Words*, published in 1658, speaks of "mule-words", because they were "propagated by a Latin Sire and a Greek Dam".

Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682), for instance, the author of *Religio Medici* (1635), *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (1646), and *Hydriotaphia* (1658), one of the greatest writers of English prose, was very fond of fashioning Latin and Greek compounds with English terminations. He indeed was a maker of "mule-words", and Coleridge somewhat heatedly accused him of being a corruptor of the language. He was probably enraged by phrases like "commutatively iniquous in the valuation of transgressions", which are

so characteristic of the uncommonly Latinized vocabulary of Sir Thomas Browne.

In this he was, however, surpassed by his contemporary, Sir Thomas Urquhart (1611 ?-1660), the great translator of Rabelais and author of *Pantochronocanon* (1652), *Eskubalauron* (1652), and *Logopandecteision, or, an Introduction to the Universal Language*, published in 1653. Urquhart's monster titles and "dachshund-words" seem to re-echo a century later in Henry Carey's burlesque and satirical play *Chrononhotonthologos*, which was acted on 22nd February, 1734, as the *Most Tragical Tragedy that ever was Tragediz'd by any Company of Tragedians*. The play contains the famous passage "Aldiborontiphoscophornio, where left you Chrononhotonthologos?" This burlesque of the author of the ballad *Sally in our Alley* shows to what an extent some bombastic dramatists of the eighteenth century inflated their histrionic sails with Mediterranean wind, their "cogitative faculties immersed in cogibundity of cogitation". Almost a century later Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) used the name Aldiborontiphoscophornio to describe and ridicule the pomposity of the solicitor and bookseller, James Ballantyne (1772-1833). His cheerful brother, John Ballantyne (1774-1821), got away lightly, since he was nicknamed Rigdumfunnidos, after another character that inhabited the kingdom of Queerummania.

With Sir Thomas Urquhart, however, words like *Pantochronocanon* and *Trissotetras* are not expressions of polysyllabic humour, and when this last and greatest of the great translators of the Elizabethan age speaks of "disergetic lexonosphericals", proceeds to the "catheteuretic operation" and deals a blow to the "ministerian philoplutaries", he is not trying to be funny, but is in all seriousness merely an extreme representative of the customary Latinism and Græcism that characterized the style of his period.

George Bull (1634-1710), Bishop of St. David's, to select another outstanding example, wrote in Latin and therefore was not only famous in his own country, but was known throughout Europe, and Isaac Newton's (1642-1727) epoch-making work *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* (1687) was written in the language still familiar to all learned men and scientists of the Western hemisphere. Considering the student's time-devouring dedication to Latin and Greek studies we can understand the complaint of the

author of *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Complete English Gentleman*, Daniel Defoe (1661 ?-1731), that "students come away masters of science, critics of Greek and Hebrew, perfect in language, and perfectly ignorant of their mother tongue".

The language position in the England of his day is most eloquently and lucidly described by the great founder of the analytic philosophy of mind, John Locke (1632-1704), whose work *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1690) is, in addition to its other merits, also a pioneer work for the teaching of English. In this treatise John Locke demands themes in English instead of "Themes, Declamations and Verses in Latin", and the reading of "those things that are well writ in English". "Since 'tis English," he pleads, "than an English gentleman will have constant use of, that is the Language he should chiefly cultivate, and wherein most Care should be taken to polish and perfect his Style . . . This I find universally neglected, and no care taken anywhere to improve young Men in their own Language, that they may thoroughly understand and be masters of it. If any one among us have a Facility or Purity more than ordinary in his Mother Tongue, it is owing to Chance, or his Genius, or anything, rather than to his Education or any Care of his Teacher. To mind what English his Pupil speaks or writes, is below the Dignity of one bred up amongst Greek and Latin, though he have but little of them himself. These are the learned Languages fit only for learned men to meddle with and teach. English is the language of illiterate Vulgar."

How right and imperative John Locke's criticism was is clearly revealed in the attitude of Edward Hyde, first Earl of Clarendon (1609-1674), who is regarded as one of the great masters of English prose. He looked for the models of his style in Latin literature, and his dialogue *On Education* suggests a more conversational approach in the teaching of Latin, an aim which should be achieved by discussions and the acting of plays.

The prominence of Latin in schools was unchallenged, and in the beginning of the seventeenth century, supreme. The aim was to relieve the universities from the teaching of Latin. The preparation, therefore, was most comprehensive, consisting of *pueriles confabulationunculæ* (children's Latin work), colloquies, catachisms, letter writing, the making of verses and, culminating in the sixth form, in the making and delivering of original orations.

The realization of the danger of foreign influence to the English language is, however, not always a complete safeguard. Dryden (1631-1700), for instance, warns against the corruption "of our English idiom by mixing it too much with French", and yet in his Preface to *Troilus and Cressida* (1679) he says: "But how barbarously we yet write and speak your Lordship knows, and I am sufficiently sensible in my own English. For I am often put to a stand in considering whether what I write be the idiom of the tongue, or false grammar and nonsense couched beneath the specious name of Anglicism. And have no other way to clear my doubts but by translating my English into Latin, and thereby trying what sense the words will bear in a more stable language." Even if we accept such a statement with a pinch of salt, it is an undisputable fact that its writer did look upon Latin as a guiding mistress. Maybe, however, Dryden merely wanted to impress upon his Lordship that he had no difficulty in translating his own complicated sentences into the language of Cicero. English, according to Dryden, "is a composition of the dead and living tongues . . . not only of the Greek and Latin, but of the Old German, the French, and the Italian." But he explains hopefully: "We may one day expect to speak and write a language worthy of the English wit, and which foreigners may not disdain to learn."

The rivalry of the two language groups had by no means exhausted itself in the eighteenth century, but there is a considerable quantitative change as far as the use of language is concerned. English is supreme mistress, and Latin and French only make an occasional appearance as, for instance, in the writings of Thomas Gray (1716-1771). Though the volume of his work is not very imposing, it does contain several attempts in Latin, his ode *O tu severi Religio loci*, and thirty lines on the death of his friend Richard West which have been considered worthy of comparison with Milton's *Epitaphium Damonis*.

The language problem of the eighteenth century is, however, one of style, of an Anglo-Saxon or a Latinized diction. Macaulay's analysis of the style of Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) may serve as an amusing and characteristic example. Commenting on Croker's *Boswell*, Macaulay writes in the *Edinburgh Review*: "Johnson's conversation appears to have been quite equal to his writings in matter, and far superior to them in manner. When he talked, he

clothed his wit and sense in forcible and natural expressions. As soon as he took his pen in his hand to write for the public, his style became systematically vicious. All his books are written in a learned language—in a language which nobody hears from his mother or his nurse—in a language in which nobody ever quarrels, or drives bargains, or makes love—in a language in which nobody ever thinks. It is clear that Johnson did not think in the dialect in which he wrote. The expressions which came first to his tongue were simple, energetic, and picturesque. When he wrote for publication he did his sentences out of English into Johnsonese. His letters from the Hebrides to Mrs. Thrale are the original of that work of which the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* is the translation, and it is amusing to compare the two versions. 'When we were taken upstairs,' says he in one of his letters, 'a dirty fellow bounced out of a bed on which one of us was to lie.' This incident is recorded in the *Journal* as follows. 'Out of one of the beds on which we were to repose, started up, at our entrance, a man black as a Cyclops from the forge.' Sometimes Johnson translated aloud. 'The Rehearsal,' he said, very unjustly, 'has not wit enough to keep it sweet': then, after a pause: 'It has not vitality enough to preserve it from putrefaction.' " Johnson seems to have adjusted his style of delivery after the method applied by Touchstone in his interlude with the rustic, quoted above, with the only difference of a reversed order in the translation.

Most strongly the influence of Latin had maintained itself in the field of grammar. Even those who condemned the idea of teaching English through the medium of Latin were still in favour of using the nomenclature of Latin grammar. The study of English grammar was looked upon as a preparation for the subsequent learning of Latin. Thus, William Ward, in his *Grammar of the English Tongue* (1767) advocated the retention of Latin nomenclature on the ground that: "As no man knows but he may have occasion to learn some other language, why should he not be taught the English Rudiments in such a manner as may be of service towards his learning any other language."

Lindley Murray (1745-1826) in his *English Grammar* (1795) simply applied the whole paraphernalia of Latin grammar to the English language. Since the teaching of the classics was still in the foreground, language masters found this approach very

convenient and helpful for their teaching of foreign languages, and Murray's book became very popular. There were, however, people who revolted against this artificial method, insisting that English grammar should be in complete accordance with the spirit of the language.

It proved to be a hard and arduous struggle against an ingrained tradition, which though in itself fine and glorious and of highest cultural value, retarded the ultimate liberation of the English language, and kept it to a certain extent in bondage. The struggle continued throughout the nineteenth century, and the effects made themselves felt even in the twentieth. Educated men were steeped in classical ideas, ideals, and language. John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), for instance, knew the Greek alphabet at the age of three, and he did not see anything unusual in the achievement of having read a considerable number of Greek works in the original at the age of eight.

Milton's standard biographer, David Masson (1822-1907), as late as 1890 could write that "questions of English syntax are often best settled practically, if a settlement is wanted, by reference to Latin construction, and he was only one of many who shared his ideas. They were, however, increasingly opposed by purists like Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864), who vigorously tried to "stop innovations and to diminish the anomalies of our language", or the great naturalist Charles Darwin (1809-1882), who "had the strongest disbelief in the *common idea* that the classical scholar must write good English", and the scientist, Thomas H. Huxley (1825-1895), who wrote to *The Times* (5th August, 1890): "My impression has been that the Genius of the English language is widely different from that of Latin; and that the worst and most abased kinds of English style are those which ape Latinity."

It is hard to believe, but nevertheless true, Richard Mulcaster's demand that English should be given a prominent place in the education of English people was still unfulfilled after nearly four hundred years, and in the twentieth century enthusiasts were still fighting hard to secure basic recognition for the mother tongue within the scheme of national education.

This, on a large canvas, is the historical picture of the growth of the English language. It reveals the two powerful forces struggling with each other in never ceasing combat, at times so closely mingled

that the dividing line between home-grown and foreign-bred elements became almost imperceptible ; a continuous up and down of victory and defeat on both sides, yet always entailing progress, enrichment, compromise, and ultimately fusion and balance. The product of centuries, this unique and complex language of great beauty and vast possibilities was not made but has organically grown in a unique historic process that cannot and need not be discarded.

Let us proceed, then, and study in greater detail the linguistic difficulties and peculiar problems which have arisen from it, and observe in close analysis their effect upon the national life of the people.

CHAPTER THREE

THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Alice had not the slightest idea what Latitude was, or Longitude either, but she thought they were nice grand words to say.

L. Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.

The powerful influence of the languages of Greece and the Roman Empire, of Italy, Spain, and France was potent in other languages as well, for, after all, the Mediterranean was the cradle of European civilization. To select a typical example, it seems that the German language was more or less exposed to the same dangers of foreign infiltration, and yet it emerged triumphant and pure. The parallel, however, is only a superficial one, because German merely passed through the "interlarding process", which also afflicted the English language; but there was no fusion with any other language, and modern German, therefore, is the direct descendant of Old High German and Middle High German, whereas Middle English, as spoken and written by Chaucer, did not entirely grow out of the body of Anglo-Saxon. French was grafted upon the Germanic mother tongue, and the product of this marriage was a new language that was neither Middle Anglo-Saxon nor Middle Norman French, but Middle English. Old High German, for instance, gradually blended into Middle High German, which in its turn developed into Modern High German. Thus, the position of English and German, as far as foreign penetration is concerned, is *fundamentally* different.

The biological laws dominating racial mixture of suitable elements also apply to the intermarriage of languages. Its outcome, if successful, should be a quantitative as well as qualitative enrichment. The English language, as it finally emerged from the long contest described in the preceding chapter, had organically acquired a complexity and intricacy unparalleled in other European languages as well as a profusion of synonyms that substantially contributed

to the great literary and lingual achievements of a Shakespeare or a Milton. It is a truism that great poets and writers mould, improve, cultivate, and, to a certain extent, create a language, but it is not always realized that a richer, subtler language is conducive to richer and subtler poetry and favours the emergence of great writers. Shakespeare reached a yet unsurpassed peak in world literature, but the question, however idle, arises whether he could have attained the same degree of eminence in a language of a more limited scope.

The excellencies and advantages of the English language are sufficiently apparent ; but to apply them intellectual qualities are demanded whose absence must turn these virtues into as many deficiencies and drawbacks. A wealth of synonyms calls for greater intellectual precision, or it leads to redundancy and pleonasms, and intricacy, if not coupled with accuracy, easily degenerates into tediousness and obscurity. A complex and highly developed language is full of pitfalls to the inferior writer, and the average English person who does not know a Romance language and, therefore, does not understand the meaning of a great many of the roots, is almost bound to fall a prey to inexactness and confusion.

The examples given in Chapter One have shown the great advantage other languages have in this respect by using native words derived from native roots which are safely anchored in the minds of educated and uneducated alike. Replenishing the list we find that our word *emetic*, which is derived from Greek ἐμετικός (emetikos), and means causing sickness, in Dutch is simply rendered by *braakmiddel*, from *braak* vomit, belch, and *middel* meaning remedy, etymologically our words *break* and *middle*. The same combination appears in German as *Brechmittel*, Swedish *kräkmedel* from *kräkas*, to vomit, Danish *Brækmiddel* and Norwegian *brekk-middel*. The Czechs make use of *davidlo* from *daviti*, to vomit, to bring up, and the Hungarians too keep clear of Greek with their *hánytató* from *hánytat*, to make sick, and the Welsh have nine words to produce the desired effect by means of native roots, one of them being *cyfoglyn* from *cyfogi*, to cast up. We share our word with the Spanish, Portuguese, and Italians, who have *emético*, *emiticidade*, and *emético* respectively, and we also fall in line with them with our clumsy word *hippopotamus*, which in Spanish is *hipopótamo*, in Portuguese *hippopótamo*, and in Italian *ippopotamo*.

The Hungarians use the concise and expressive term *vizilo* from *vizi* living in water, and *lo* meaning horse. In Dutch we find *nijlpaard*, and in German *Nilpferd*, both combinations of the River Nile and horse. In Swedish, our hippopotamus appears as *flodhäst*, *flod* meaning river and *häst* horse, and so it does in Danish *Flodhest* and Norwegian *flodhest*. Thus, where writers of other nations aptly made a translation of the Greek word ἵπποπόταμος (hippopotamos) from ἵππος (hippos) horse, and ποταμός (potamos) river, which explains why we find the rather inappropriate "horse" in all these compounds, the English thirteenth century writer who introduced the monster simply adopted it in its Greek-French form *ypotame*. Welsh, for instance, shows the former procedure very clearly in its words *afonfarch*, *gwyfarch*, and *dyfrfarch*, *farch* meaning horse, and *afon* (which is our avon) river, *gwy* and *dyfr* meaning water.

The English method has the disadvantage that the schoolboy is compelled to memorize what he considers to be the name of this pachydermatous quadruped in the same way in which he would commit to memory a word like *Popocatepetl*. On the other hand, the foreign word makes it clear to him that the "hippo" is not likely to emerge from the waters of an English river, but rather from a pond in the Zoological Gardens. A Swedish or Austrian child, however, might be inclined to believe that the Göta Elf or the Blue Danube are inhabited by ordinary "river horses".

Our word *pyre*, from Greek πύρα (pura), which is based on πυρ (pyr) fire, is not supported like the Italian *pira* meaning funeral pile by *piropo* ruby and *piro scafo* steamboat. In German and Dutch we find straightforward, self-descriptive terms like *Scheiterhaufen* a pile of logs (*Scheiter* logs, *Haufen* heap) and *brandstapel* "burn staple" (*brand* fire, *stapel* heap). Obviously, Polish *zgliszczce* (from *zglić* to burn slowly) imitates the hissing flames slowly consuming stake and corpse. Czech has *hranice dříví* pile of wood, and Hungarian employs *maglya* for funeral pile, or stake. The Danes use the word *ligbaal*, from *lig* corpse and *baal* fire, and similarly the Norwegians have *likbål*.

The same position we find in the case of *tripod* from τρίπους (tripous) or τρίπουδ (tripod) and *zodiac* from ζωδιακός (zodiacos). Again, the Germanic languages produced translations of the Greek words, such as *Dreifuss* in German, *drievoet* in Dutch, and *trefot* in Swedish, *drei*, *drie*, and *tre*, meaning three, and *Fuss*, *voet*, and

foot meaning foot, *trefot* being the Norwegian and *trefod* the Danish words. The Hungarians more explicitly describe the tripod as *háromlábú székhely*, from *három* three, *láb* foot, and *szék* chair, seat. The Poles made it *trojnog*, from *trojaki* threefold, and *noga* foot, leg, and the same procedure is followed in Czech *třínožka* and in Welsh *triffod*. As a matter of fact, there was an older English form : three-foot-stool. Though *tripod* can be found in Chapman's *Iliad* as early as 1611, Walter Scott, in *Kenilworth*, for instance, prefers the Germanic form when he writes : " So saying he approached to the fire a three-footed stool."

The Portuguese use the Greek form *zodiaco*, but also *cinta*, meaning girdle, sash ; but our Germanic cousins have *dierenriem* in Dutch from *dieren* animal, and *riem* strap, belt, *djurkrets* in Swedish, *Dyrekretsen* in Danish, *Dyrekredsen* in Norwegian, and *Tierkreis* in German, *djur*, *Dyre*, *Tier* meaning animal, and *krets*, *Kretsen*, *kredsen*, and *Kreis* meaning circle. The Czechs, and also the Hungarians, translated Greek *zodiakos* into their native *zvěrokruh* and *állat-kör*, *zvěř* meaning game, *állat* animal, and *kruh* and *kör* circle. Compared with the Polish expression *zwierzyniec niebieski*, the English term *zodiac* seems to be very simple and easily acquired, though actually it is the other way round. An Englishman, naturally, will find *zodiac* easier than the teeth-breaking Polish term, but from the point of view of the Polish and English child this is totally different. Whereas little John will have to make a mental effort to learn the Greek word *zodiac*, little Stanislav will find it child's play to remember the expression " heavenly animal garden ", for that is what *zwierzyniec niebieski* means, from *zwierze* animal, *zwierzyniec* animal garden, and *niebieski* heavenly. It is easier to assimilate " heavenly animal garden " than " zodiac ", for the Polish version because of its fairy tale character appeals to the imagination of the child. The Greek-English word, however, fails to produce such a response, unless we know ζῳδιον (*zodion*) the sculptured figure of an animal, a diminutive of ζῷον (*zoon*) animal.

The word *estuary*, no doubt, is familiar to every English school-boy, but he and the man in the street cannot understand its root meaning. Only the knowledge of the Latin word *æstuarium* meaning tidal can form a good associative link with the English meaning of *estuary*, which is : the tidal mouth of a river. Once

more we come across native terms in other purely Germanic languages, such as *mond van en rivier* mouth of a river, and *zeearm* sea-arm, in Dutch, *mynning af en flod* mouth (lit. mouthing) of a river, in Swedish, *Flodmunding* and *Flussmündung*, in Danish and German. It is understandable that Norway, the land of fjords, should have produced four words for estuary which are *os*, *munning*, *elvemunning*, and *fjordgap*. The word *elv* stands for river, *munning* for mouth (ing), and *gap* for mouth, throat, opening. In Welsh, we find three words for estuary: *genau afon*, *aber* or *aberfa*, and *moryd*. English falls in with the Romance languages, which as such naturally link up with Latin. In French, we have *estuaire*, in Spanish *estuario* and *estero*, in Portuguese *esteiro*, and in Italian *estuario*.

A few more examples all represent the many cases of Greek terms which in the course of time have become ordinary words in English but are by no means easily acquired by the ordinary person, because, after all, they have remained Greek. *Hydrophobia*, for instance, to those who know Greek is a compound of ὕδρω (hydro-) from ὕδωρ (hydor) water, and φόβος (phobos) fear, because the aversion to water is a symptom of *rabies* or canine madness when transmitted to man. The word *rabies* again is based on Latin *rabio* rave. The fact that the word rave is derived from *rabio* is, of course, no help to the average person, for he does not even suspect that *rave* and *rabies* are members of the same family. The Danish word for hydrophobia is *Vandskræk*, which is the exact translation of the Greek word, for *Vand* means water and *Skræk* terror, fright. Another Danish word for the same thing is *Hundegalskap*, from *Hund* dog and *gal* mad, crazy. The same course was pursued by the Norwegians with *vannskrekk*; and the German words for that dreaded disease are the self-evident expressions *Hundswut*, meaning "dogmadness" and *Tollwut* "mad fury".

A classical scholar like Hume could afford to play with Greek words as he did in the following letter (1772) in which he confesses: "I am mortally sick at sea, and regard with a kind of *hydrophobia* the great gulf that lies between us," but the danger of such words which invites corruption emerges clearly in "*Hydroforbia* or abhorynge of water", a form which was used by Boorde in his *Brev. Health*, 1547.

According to the dictionary, *gender* and *sex* are two distinct

terms, *gender* meaning "each of the three grammatical 'kinds', corresponding more or less to distinction of sex", and *sex* meaning "the sum of those differences in structure and function of the reproductive organs on the ground of which beings are distinguished as male and female, and of the other physiological differences consequent of these". The etymological analysis of the two expressions, however, shows that originally they carried the same sense, namely that of sex. Nature provided the sexual differentiation, *male* and *female*, man reflected it lingually by creating sex particles, the definite and indefinite articles, designating *masculine* and *feminine* gender. The natural difference was described by the Latin word *sexus* and its descriptive denomination was drawn from the Greek word γένος, L. *genus*. For primitive man, sex was such a powerful and all-pervading force that it appeared to him not only in its natural manifestations but also in the inanimate world around him. He projected his sex life into most inanimate objects, as far as they appealed to his imagination, and endowed them with sexual significance. This significance, in most cases, has become obscure and lost its meaning, and therefore the arbitrary character of gender has become enhanced. The interchangeability of the meaning of the two roots is illustrated in a passage that occurs in the *Towneley Mysteries* (1460): "Has thou oght writen there of the femynyn genere?" and in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* we find "the great love the general gender bear him", where gender is used in the sense of L. *genus*, from Indo-Germanic *gen-* to beget, engender, produce. The fact that originally, long before the dawn of writing, sex and gender were one is still reflected in the Danish word *Køn*, in Norwegian *kjønn*, and in German *Geschlecht*, all meaning gender as well as sex. *Køn* and *kjønn* have their English counterpart in *kin*, signifying people of the same ancestral stock or family, a blood relationship which is also expressed in *kindred* and *king*, the father or rather son of the tribe (Anglo-Saxon *cyning*, from *cyn* tribe).

The English *cemetery* from the Greek κοιμητήριον (*koim-et-er-ion*), meaning a place to sleep in, has no lingual counterpart in Danish and Norwegian, but they seem to manage quite nicely with their *Kirkegaard* and *kirkegård*, our churchyard. Similarly, the German representatives are *Friedhof* an enclosed yard, *Kirchhof* churchyard, *Totenacker* the field of the dead, and *Gottesacker* God's

acre. Though the modern age has produced a German *Krematorium*, there is no such thing as a German *Kemetorium*.

A *dissembler*, from Latin *dis* and *similis* in English, is also called a *hypocrite*, which is the Greek ὑποκριτής (*hypokrites*), that is, somebody who puts on an act instead of being sincere. The Danes, Norwegians, and Germans created the Germanic words *Hykler*, *hykler*, and *Heuchler*, and the adjective hypocritical is *hyklersk* in Danish and Norwegian, and *heuchlerisch* in German, or *skinhellig* in the former, and *scheinheilig* in the latter, meaning pretence of holiness, affected piety, or literally, people who behave in a "seem-holy" manner.

The typographical mark of reference (*) is described by the Greek word *asterisk*, from ἀστερίσκος (*asteriskos*) [diminutive of ἀστήρ (*aster*)], signifying a little star. In Danish and Norwegian *Stjerne* and *stjerne*, meaning star, do the trick as competently, and the German *Sternchen* ("starlet") is the literal translation of the Greek word. Trevisa, when he wrote about "a signe that hatte asteriscus" cautiously elaborated "and is i-shape liche a sterre" (shaped like a star), for he did not assume that many of his readers would understand the meaning of *asteriscus* in 1387.

The average English person, when he feels compelled or inclined to vomit, or regards something as loathsome, and uses the expression *nausea*, has no idea that he is borrowing the Greek word ναυσία (*nausia*) meaning "ship sickness" [from the Greek word ναῦς (*naus*) ship], the original expression for seasickness, whereas the Danes with *kvalme* from *kvalm* close, stuffy, and the Norwegians with *sjøsyke* and *kvalme*, rely on their own native resources.

Synopsis, from σύν (*syn*) together and ὄψις (*opsis*) sight, is the Greek word for "seeing something all together", because of its condensed presentation, which enables us to visualize a thing that is otherwise too large or too complex to be taken in at a glance. The Danes translated this into *Oversigt* and the Norwegians into *oversikt*, *uttog*, *utdag*, and the Germans have *Übersicht*, which means "oversight", that is letting your eye (-sight) travel over something in order to sum it up.

Our *pentagon* in Greek is πεντάγωνος (*pentagonos*) for a five-sided figure from πέντε (*pente*) five and γωνία (*gonia*) an angle. The word "five-angle" may sound strange in English, but it

would be as easy and natural as Danish *Femkant*, German *Fünfeck*, and Norwegian *femkant*, all combinations of the words five and edge or corner. Besides, it would fit in nicely with triangle, quadrangle, and rectangle.

The Greek word πέτρος (petros) L. *petra*, meaning stone, induced British scholars to coin the word *petrify*. In our languages of comparison the corresponding words are made of home-quarried stone: *forstene* in Danish and Norwegian, and *versteinern* in German, from Danish and Norwegian *Sten*, *sten*, and German *Stein*, all meaning stone.

The English word *parasite*, from the Greek παρά (para) by the side of, and σῖτος (sitos) bread, food, signifies somebody who eats at our expense. Such a person is far more effectively denounced as a "sponge-guest" in Danish *Snyltegæst* and Norwegian *snyltegjest*.

Stratagem, from Greek στρατήγημα (strategema) [στράτος (stratos) army and ἄγειν (agein) to lead], the device of a general, in Danish, Norwegian, and German is *Kriegslist*, *kriegslist*, and *Kriegslist*, in that order.

A *syringe*, which in Greek is a reed or pipe [σῦριγξ (syrinks)], appears as *Sprøjte* and *sprøjte* in the Scandinavian languages, and as *Spritze* in German, from the verbs *sprøjte* and *spritzen* meaning to spurt, to squirt.

Our word *intoxicate*, which was taken from the Greek τοξικόν (toksikon) meaning poison retained that sinister meaning in the first half of the sixteenth century, for in Palsgrave (1530) we read: "I intoxycat, I poyson with venyme." According to Fleming, however, you could be "intoxicated with Bacchus berries", in 1576, though Boswell, in a letter written on 12th August, 1775, draws a somewhat shaky line between intoxicated and drunk, saying: "I ran wild but did not get drunk. I was, however, intoxicated and very ill next day." In other purely Germanic languages we find simple terms that speak for themselves without trying to frighten the indulgent person into abstention: *beruse* in Danish, *ruse* and *beruse* in Norwegian, and *sich berauschen* in German.

These examples could be increased almost *ad infinitum* and furnished for other languages as well, proving that to achieve the same result the English-speaking person is compelled to learn more,

and to tax his memory much more heavily than nationals of other countries.

It is, however, not only the smaller number of roots which facilitates intellectual acquisition and mental assimilation for other nations, thus helping them to achieve a more highly educated average. There is also the equally important fact of mental association. Since there are fewer roots in the languages quoted, it is obvious that the same material must be used more extensively in order to cover the same range of expression. Thus, in such languages, we find larger groups of words clustered around a native root, all held together by association, which is the main help in the process of memorizing and retention, whereas their English counterparts represent a number of roots and words which are not assembled by association except for those who know the meaning of the foreign roots.

One example, the German word *nehmen*, meaning take, will be sufficient to demonstrate the truth of this observation. The amazingly numerous offspring of this word is produced by the simple device of compounding it with prefixes, prepositions, and other parts of speech, a process which is also used in English, though to a much lesser degree. Let the list of words speak for itself. (A literal translation of the German words is given in single quotes in order to show the simplicity of the pattern and to emphasize its associative character.)

nehmen to take.

abnehmen to take off, deprive, obtain, diminish, decrease, subside, abate, amputate, wane, slimming.

Abnahme 'the off-take', decrease, diminution, abatement, decline, subsiding.

angenehm agreeable, pleasant, sympathetic.

annehmen 'take on', accept, receive, accede (a request), embrace, acquire, assume, adopt, suppose, presume.

Annehmer 'on-taker', acceptor.

Annehmlichkeit 'on-takeableness', acceptableness, agreeableness, pl. conveniences, amenities.

annehmbar 'on-takeable', acceptable, passable, agreeable, plausible.

Annehmbarkeit 'on-takeability', acceptability, admissibility.

annehmenswert 'worth taking on', worthy of acceptance.

aufnehmen to take up, receive, absorb, admit (a person), contract (a loan).

Aufnahme 'up-take', admission, admittance.

ausnehmen to take out, except, exclude, disembowel.

ausnehmend 'out-takingly', exceeding(ly).

Ausnahme 'the out-take', exception, anomaly.

Ausnahmefall 'case taken out' (of the ordinary), exceptional case.

Ausnahmefrachtsätze 'out-taken (exceptional) rates of freight', differential rates.

sich benehmen 'to be-take oneself', to behave, to conduct oneself.

darannehmen to take in hand.

durchnehmen to take through, to deal with (a subject).

einnehmen to take in, partake of, receive and collect (money), capture.

für sich einnehmen 'taken in in favour of oneself', to prepossess, captivate.

eingenommen 'taken-in', prejudiced, biased, (favourably) impressed.

Eingenommenheit 'taken-in-ness', prepossession, self-conceit.

Einnehmeret 'taking-in-office', collector's office, rate-office.

Einvernehmen 'taken in accord', concord, cordial agreement.

entnehmen to take from, to draw from, infer.

entgegennehmen 'take something into one's hand', receive.

festnehmen 'take firmly', to apprehend, seize, arrest.

Festnahme, Festnehmung 'the taking firmly of', seizure, arrest.

genehm 'takeable', agreeable, convenient.

genehmigen 'to take as valid', to assent, approve of, accede, grant, sanction.

Genehmigung 'the taking of' (permission, etc.), agreement, assent, approval.

hernehmen to take to task.

sich etwas herausnehmen 'to take out' (where nobody else dares), to presume too much, to usurp, to fetch out of, to withdraw (money).

mitnehmen to take along, partake of, wear out.

mitgenommen 'taken along with' (and therefore 'worn'), run down, badly affected by.

Nachnahme 'taking afterwards' (money), C.O.D.

unangenehm disagreeable, unpleasant.

unannehmbar 'untake-onable', unacceptable, inadmissible.

Unannehmlichkeit 'untake-onableness', disagreeableness, trouble.

Überhandnahme 'taking more into your hand' (than can be tolerated), excessiveness.

überhandnehmen 'to take too much in hand', to become prevalent, to be excessive.

übernehmen 'to take over', to take possession of, take charge of

sich übernehmen 'to overtake oneself', to over-exert oneself.

unternehmen to undertake, to take action.

unternehmend 'undertaking', enterprising, venturesome.

Unternehmer industrialist.

Unternehmertum 'undertakerdom', speculators.

Unternehmungsgeist, Unternehmungslust initiative, spirit of adventure.

unvornehm 'not taken out' (of distinguished set), undistinguished.

vernehmen 'to take before one' (in order to question), interrogate, perceive.

vernehmlich 'intakeable', intelligible, distinct, audible.

Vernehmlichkeit 'intakeableness', perceptibility, audibility, intelligibleness.
vornehm 'taken out' (of common herd), distinguished.

vornehmen 'to take before' (I take somebody else), treat preferentially.

sich vornehmen 'to take before one' (resolution), resolve.

sich jemanden vornehmen 'to take somebody before oneself' (in order to tell him off), to 'buy' somebody.

Vornehmheit 'taken-outness', distinction, high rank.

vornehmlich 'taken out before' (all others), principally, pre-eminently.

Vornehmteuererei 'doing as if taken out of ordinary', assuming an air of superiority.

vorwegnehmen 'taking away before' (somebody else gets in), anticipate.

Wegnahme 'taking-away', removal, abstraction.

wegnehmen 'to take away', to displace, remove.

Zunahme 'the taking to' (of something to something), increase, augmentation, rise.

zunehmen 'to take to', to increase, wax, gain weight.

zunehmen 'taking to' (bigger shape), accrescent, increasingly.

zurücknehmen to take back, countermand, rescind.

sich zusammennehmen 'to take oneself together', to collect oneself, to pull oneself together.

These seventy-one examples, which do not exhaust the combinative possibilities of the word *nehmen*, are characteristic of Germanic languages, but they are equally revealing as regards their English equivalents. We observe the great variety of the English words, their complex associative pattern, where the German is satisfied with simple compounds, we are aware of pitfalls of pronunciation in English, where there are none in German. As far as pronunciation is concerned, not one of the seventy-one words offers any difficulty to the average German. Their English counterparts, however, contain a fair number of stumbling-blocks, and even a highly educated person will have to be careful not to fall over some of them. A German announcer could read out the list practically with closed eyes, an over-confident English broadcaster might easily come to grief over his. The reading out of the word *Annehmbarkeit*, for instance, which is pronounced like the four English syllables un, name, bar, kite, read out as one word is plain sailing. The English translation of it, *acceptability* and *admissibility*, is heavy going. It is true, for some of the English expressions other German synonyms could be found, but they would be simple Germanic terms based on self-explanatory roots, and the general pattern would not even remotely approach the mixed and variegated character of the English tongue.

All these differences of the English language, compared with other related and unrelated tongues, are due to the historical and lingual developments outlined in the preceding chapter. We could, however, speculate on the possibility of an undiluted victory of Norman French over Anglo-Saxon, the speech of the subject British people in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Had this been the case French would have become the national idiom of the British Isles, and consequently French to-day would maintain the undisputed position of *the* universal language, because apart from the French empire it would be spoken in all parts of the British Commonwealth, as well as in the U.S.A., outrivalling even the languages of the Far Eastern countries. It should be a fascinating, though idle, pastime to puzzle out the political consequences of such a hypothetical eventuality, and one may well ask oneself whether the first and second World Wars would have taken place. The strong bond of a common language shared by Great Britain and France with the United States, and the cultural implications of such a situation would, almost of necessity, have changed the course of the history of Europe.

On the other hand, if the development of English had been spared the invasion by the French language, or if it had altogether ousted it, because William the Conqueror had rediscovered his Germanic heart, Middle English would have grown organically out of Anglo-Saxon, preserving all its Germanic characteristics and the pattern of a pure language, and its structure to-day would be very much like that of Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, or German.

A fleeting glance at Anglo-Saxon will sufficiently illustrate this point. The Anglo-Saxon word *tuddor*, for instance, meaning offspring, descent, issue, provided the building material for such words as *tuddorfæst* fertile, *tuddorful* prolific, *tuddorfoster* nourishment of offspring, and *tuddorsped*, meaning fertility. Because of the infiltration of the French language, the word *tuddor* and its offspring were lost in and after the Middle English period—the Early Middle English form being *tuder*, meaning product. Without the partial assimilation of French words *tuder* would have produced corresponding modern English forms ; that is to say, this word and its compounds and derivatives would have covered the ground that at present requires the employment of six entirely different words, one of which only is of native growth.

Similarly, the modern English words *equivocal*, *questionable*, *dubious*, *ambiguous*, *uncertain*, *doubt*, *hesitate*, in Anglo-Saxon were expressed by words of one family, namely *tweogende*, *tweogendlic*, *tweolic*, *tweona*, *tweonian*, and *tweonol*. More Anglo-Saxon examples chosen at random would clearly demonstrate that the principle of uniformity of vocabulary and straightforward association of ideas, which prevails in our languages of comparison, was equally at work in Anglo-Saxon. The language of Alfred and Ælfric thus offered fewer difficulties to the British people who had to master it than our complex modern English vocabulary does to their descendants.

Since fewer roots were available to express everything that was in the Anglo-Saxon mind it was, of course, expedient that the greatest possible use should be made of the word material at its disposal. This explains the associative character of Anglo-Saxon, which reduced memory work and facilitated fluency. It also stands to reason that such a language would invite the formation of compounds, where modern English resorts to the method of using different roots, or of separation into several words, or the coining of a short phrase. Let the Anglo-Saxon word *heofon*, meaning heaven, demonstrate this point for us, together with its family of compounds and derivatives, and their opposite numbers in modern English :—

<i>heofon</i>	sky, firmament, heaven.
„ <i>-beacen</i>	sign in the sky (<i>beacen</i> —our beacon—meaning sign, token, etc.).
„ <i>-beorht</i>	heavenly bright.
„ <i>-biggende</i>	chaste.
„ <i>-byme</i>	heavenly trumpet.
„ <i>-candel</i>	sun, moon, stars.
„ <i>-cenned</i>	heaven-born.
„ <i>-colu</i>	heat of the sun.
„ <i>-cund</i>	celestial, heavenly.
„ <i>-cundlic</i>	heavenly.
„ <i>-cyning</i>	King of Heaven, Christ.
„ <i>-dema</i>	heavenly ruler (<i>dema</i> judge, ruler ; <i>deman</i> to judge).
„ <i>-dream</i>	joy of heaven.
„ <i>-duguð</i>	heavenly host (<i>duguð</i> body of noble retainers, army, host).
„ <i>-engel</i>	angel of heaven.
„ <i>-fleogende</i>	flying.
„ <i>-flod</i>	torrent (of rain).

<i>heofon-fugol</i>	fowl of the air.
„ <i>-fyr</i>	fire from heaven, lightning.
„ <i>-hæbbend</i>	' heaven-having ', possessor of heaven.
„ <i>-halig</i>	holy and heavenly.
„ <i>-ham</i>	heavenly home.
„ <i>-heah</i>	' heaven-high ', reaching to heaven.
„ <i>-heall</i>	heavenly hall.
„ <i>-hlaf</i>	' loaf ', bread of heaven, manna.
„ <i>-hrof</i>	' roof ', vault of heaven, heaven.
„ <i>-hwealf</i>	vault of heaven (<i>hwealf</i> vault, arch).
„ <i>-hyrst</i>	ornament of heaven (<i>hyrst</i> ornament, jewel, treasure).
„ <i>-isc</i>	heavenly.
„ <i>-leoht</i>	heavenly light.
„ <i>-leoma</i>	heavenly light (<i>leoma</i> ray of light, beam, gleam).
„ <i>-lic</i>	celestial, chaste; adv. <i>heofonlice</i> .
„ <i>-maegen</i>	heavenly force (<i>maegen</i> bodily strength, might, power).
„ <i>-rice</i>	Kingdom of Heaven.
„ <i>-setl</i>	' chair ', throne of heaven.
„ <i>-steorra</i>	star of heaven.
„ <i>-stol</i>	' stool ', throne of heaven.
„ <i>-timber</i>	heavenly structure.
„ <i>-torht</i>	very bright, glorious (<i>torht</i> clearness, brightness).
„ <i>-tungol</i>	heavenly luminary.
„ <i>-ðreat</i>	heavenly company.
„ <i>-ðrym</i>	heavenly glory (<i>ðrym</i> multitude, host, power, glory).
„ <i>-ware</i>	inhabitants of heaven (<i>warian</i> to hold, possess).
„ <i>-wealdend</i>	the God (ruler) of heaven.
„ <i>-weard</i>	Heaven's Keeper, God.
„ <i>-werod</i>	heavenly host.
„ <i>-wlitig</i>	divinely fair (<i>wlitig</i> radiant, beautiful, fair).
„ <i>-wolcen</i>	cloud of heaven.
„ <i>-woma</i>	terrible noise from heaven (<i>woma</i> noise, howling, tumult).
„ <i>-wuldor</i>	heavenly glory.

This profusion of forms was reduced when French words began to pour in, for though the creators of words have the natural tendency to enrich their language, to introduce greater complexity, there is also the tendency of the users of words to economize, to avoid extravagance by weeding out superfluous forms. There is still an Anglo-Saxon *heofon* in Middle English in the shape of *heofene* and *hevene*, but most of the Anglo-Saxon compounds have disappeared. Some were preserved, such as *hevene-engel*, *hevenish*, *heoven-king*, *hevenlich*, *hevene-liht* (Anglo-Saxon *heofon-leoht*), *heoven-riche*, *hevene-rof* (Anglo-Saxon *heofon-hrof*), *hevene-ward*

(Anglo-Saxon *heofon-weard*), *heofen-ware*, and there are some we did not meet in Anglo-Saxon as, for instance, *hevene-bowen* rainbow, *heven-cope* canopy of heaven, *hevene-cwene* queen of heaven, *hevene-dew*, *hevene-driht* lord of heaven, *heven-loverd* lord of heaven, forms which show that, to a certain extent, Middle English had preserved the power of creating compounds, though on a definitely diminishing scale.

How the change from Germanic to Romance roots took place is most strikingly recorded in Early English forms like *outtake*, for our modern form *except*, or even more so in the hybrid transitional Germanic-Romance word-combination *outcept*, quoted in Palsgrave's *French Grammar* (1530). Swedish, for instance, has preserved its simple shape in *undantaga*, from *undan* out, and *taga* take, and so has Danish *undtage*. In the *Castle of Love* (c. 1320) the form *outgoing*, from Anglo-Saxon *ut-gang*, meaning "outgoing", and in the *Early English Psalter* *outgang* are to be found, whereas modern English has *exit*, the Latin translation of the same word from *ex* out and *iter* journey. In Danish we find the Germanic form *Udgang*, in Swedish *afsked* from *af* out, and *skeda* to separate, to depart, and in German *Ausgang*.

The heterogeneous character of the English tongue, with its multitude of roots, and its comparative lack of associative pattern, which makes it such a difficult language has, on the other hand, its great advantages. The immensely complex nature of the world we live in presents an ever increasing host of new facts and phenomena, and as we are trying to analyse, to interpret them, our demand for fresh terminology is increasing accordingly. It is obvious that a language with a richer vocabulary has a greater capacity for description, definition, and nomenclature than a more restricted one, and a complex language is a better instrument for dealing with a complex universe, for it is not forced to use the same word material over and over again, thus presenting an illusory simplicity and an associative lingual connection, where in reality there is none.

The application of this principle is particularly striking in the various sections of science, where simplification is of little use and sometimes even misleading. A complex language guarantees greater precision and avoids confusion. Chemical terms like *carbon*, *hydrogen*, *oxygen*, *nitrogen*, because they are no longer

etymologically understood, are now unambiguous scientific expressions. In German, for instance, they were translated into native terms and emerged as *Kohlenstoff*, *Wasserstoff*, *Sauerstoff*, *Stickstoff*, that is "coal-stuff", "water-stuff", "sour-stuff", "choke-stuff", translations which only convey a single quality of the substance they are meant to describe. Besides, when it comes to the description of the quantitative proportions of the elements in formulæ German chemistry does not use W for *Wasserstoff*, S for *Sauerstoff*, etc., and the chemical formula for water is not W_2S but H_2O , the universally adopted initials of the Greek words making H (hydrogen) stand for *Wasserstoff*, O (oxygen) for *Sauerstoff*, and so forth. Thus, whatever may have been gained by the coinage of native compounds is lost, because after all the German student of chemistry must learn the meaning of the Greek symbols, and finds N as an abbreviation for *Stickstoff*, an associative stumbling block, whereas N for *nitrogen* works smoothly.

The fact that English possesses the words *longitude* and *latitude* as well as *length* and *breadth*—although the etymological meaning of the two pairs is the same—is an advantage, because the combination of *longitude* and *latitude* has become an exclusively geographical concept, and as such the two words carry their own definition. In Dutch, German, and other languages, *length* and *breadth* also signify *longitude* and *latitude*, which is simpler, though according to our present state of knowledge ill-applied terminology. Coleridge rightly observed that "by familiarizing the mind to equivocal expressions, that is, such as may be taken in two or more different meanings, we introduce confusion of thought, and furnish the sophist with his best and handiest tools. For the juggle of sophistry consists, for the greater part, in using a word in one sense in the premises, and in another sense in the conclusion", or to express it in Lewis Carroll's inimitable way, "'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you *can* make words mean so many different things.'" Thus, lingual simplicity and convenience are not necessarily virtues.

In addition to the greater precision of a more complex language greater brevity and economy are also achieved, and the need for cumbersome compounds, which pure languages cannot avoid, is greatly reduced. Anglo-Saxon words, like *tungolcræftiga* or

tungolwitega for astrologer, or *Twelftamæsseæfen* for Eve of Epiphany, clearly show what would have happened if English could have preserved the purity of Anglo-Saxon, for we too would be plagued with word-monstrosities so frequently encountered in other Germanic languages. The temptation of compiling an impressive list of these lingual leviathans is great, but a few chosen at random will serve our purpose well enough. There is the Danish agglutination *Dyrebeskyttelsesforening*, composed of *Dyr* animal, *Beskyttelse* protection, and *Forening* society, association, which is our Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, or in short, S.P.C.A. Other Danish words, and they are by no means the longest, like *Frihedsberøvelse* for arrest, *Frugdsommelighed* for pregnancy, *Omkarteringspostkontor* for sorting office, the German *Herzbeutelwassersucht* for hydrocardia, *Flugzeugabwehrkanone* for flak, and the Swedish word *Statsregleringsförslag* for budget, will give us a rough idea of the development English would have followed had the Norman conquest not intervened. It seems the Conqueror arrived in time to prevent the worst. If at all, I prefer to think that I am afflicted with *appendicitis* and not with *blind-gut-inflammation*, which is the German word (*Blinddarmenzündung*) for the same thing.

There is, however, the danger that an English word, not carrying its own definition, makes us drift away from its correct meaning, that we wrongly enlarge a word's area of definition. This is most likely to happen with foreign contractions. We use the word *flak*, for instance, to describe an A.A. gun, which is correct, for *flak* is an abbreviation of the German word *Flugzeugabwehrkanone* (*FL*ugzeug*AB*wehr*K*anone, *Flugzeug* aircraft, *Abwehr* defence, "warding off," *Kanone* gun). But then people began to say and write things like: "The flak came streaming up," which, of course, is nonsense, because it would mean that the gunners, for lack of ammunition, started hurling their guns at the enemy.

It is, however, obvious that even a language that can draw upon an abundance of roots cannot possibly supply original words for every definition of thought, or find a unique expression for every shade of human feelings. A language capable of producing such a single-track vocabulary by means of an almost infinite number of permutations of sounds and symbols would hardly be practicable, because the memory work entailed would be immense. English

most certainly is not such a language, and it is therefore inevitable that one word sometimes should cover two or more meanings. Moreover, we may safely rely upon the intelligence of the speaker or hearer, and it is to be expected of the trained and disciplined brain that it should be capable of attaching the correct meaning to an ambiguous word. "It is a dull and obtuse mind, that must divide in order to distinguish," once more to quote the creator of *Kubla Khan*. The postulator, however, pre-supposes the existence of a discriminating brain.

Many writers have tried to minimize the language difficulties that arise from the fact of the mixed character of the English language, and some would like altogether to deny their existence, maintaining that the percentage of difficult foreign-bred words used by standard writers is not very high, and that there is a preponderance of simple, Anglo-Saxon words. Even if we assume that this is so, their argument is wrong, because the understanding of a sentence we read or hear does not simply depend on the percentage of words understood but also on the number of words we fail to grasp. It is quite sufficient for a sentence of, let us say, thirty-five words to contain two expressions unknown to the reader or hearer to render it unintelligible, particularly if they are expressive of the main idea of the sentence. Sometimes one word used by a lecturer, ill-chosen because of its unfamiliarity to the majority of the listeners, would make the entire sentence useless, unless the same phrase is being repeated, and a basic term is substituted for the "high-brow" expression. An experienced lecturer, by means of the vocabulary he applies, and the response of his listeners to it, should be able to gauge their intellectual and educational standard as far as their "word power" is concerned, irrespective of difficulties of a grammatical and syntactic nature.

Although the invasion of Norman-French into Anglo-Saxon produced our complex and complicated vocabulary and thus increased the difficulties of the English language, it did, on the other hand, simplify its grammar very considerably. This simplification was a natural consequence of the gradual *rapprochement* of two languages with two fundamentally different and equally complex grammatical systems which were opposing each other: Anglo-Saxon versus Norman-French grammar. In the course of time the Norman-French people had picked up a considerable

number of Anglo-Saxon words, because social exclusiveness could not altogether avoid casual contact, and the Anglo-Saxon populace was bound to learn an even greater number of French terms. In the end either side was able to carry on a short conversation in broken and ungrammatical French or Anglo-Saxon, or more often than not, a mixture of the two tongues. Naturally, the conqueror could not be expected to learn the difficult grammar of Anglo-Saxon, and French grammar was beyond the power of the average, that is uneducated, Anglo-Saxon. Practical experience, however, had shown that a minimum of grammar was sufficient to reach a satisfactory maximum of understanding that, in other words, grammar in the orthodox sense was not an unsurpassable obstacle because it could be eliminated. A skeleton grammar had been worked out, or rather had worked out itself, which had stood the test of everyday life. Gradually a process of constant adaptation had produced one of the most radical changes in the civilization of Europe, and a solution had been achieved by a compromise acceptable to the contending parties.

The emergence of a highly simplified grammar would seem to compensate the student of English for the inordinate difficulties of spelling and the bewildering complexities of the vocabulary, and it is commonly believed that the absence of grammar is an advantage to the learner. This would be so if the simplification of grammar were identical with the simplification of the problem of conveying one's meaning correctly, which, indeed, is not the case. The fewer the grammatical distinguishing marks indicating the various parts of speech, the more intelligence is required to assess their proper grammatical function.

It is true, the learning of grammatical rules and exceptions is bound to retard the initial progress of the native and foreign student, but as soon as he has mastered the rules, the scaffolding of grammar will give him a feeling of security and correctness, it will supply him with points of vantage and landmarks to help and guide him through the labyrinth of language. The more primitive the mind, the more distinguishing marks are needed to find the way of understanding.

In Anglo-Saxon, for instance, with its highly developed grammar, there was a clear distinction between noun and verb; *lufian*, to select an example at random, was the form of the verb, and *lufu*

that of the substantive. In modern English, however, the two forms have become one : *love*, that is to say, the form of the word itself no longer reveals its function. It is mainly left to our intelligence, and the context, to decide the grammatical issue. The modern English word *cook* grammatically can be all sorts of things, without changing its outward appearance, it is a veritable Jack-of-all-trades. It designates a male or female cook, it can be used as an infinitive, an imperative, first and second person singular and plural, third person plural, indicative and subjunctive. Other languages have different forms for each of these different grammatical functions, or at least for most of them. In German, for instance, a male cook is a *Koch*, a female one a *Köchin*, the infinitive is *kochen*, the imperative *koch* !, first person singular *koche*, second person *kochst*, and second person plural *kocht*. These seven forms are represented by just one in English : *cook*.

The English language has moved away from its original (Anglo-Saxon) status of grammar to such an extent that to-day it is easier for a German, a foreigner, to learn and understand Anglo-Saxon than it is for a modern Englishman, although it is his own ancestral language. The progress made by the English language within the last nine hundred years is the more remarkable, if we consider that Anglo-Saxon grammatically was even more complex than Old High German. This simplification of grammar and condensing of words, which permit of much greater flexibility and economy, have made English—barring its antiquated spelling system—the most advanced language of the Western world. Chinese has gone furthest in the direction of simplification and abbreviation, so far forth, indeed, that to-day the term grammar can hardly be applied to it any more, though in its written form it has undergone very few changes since the twentieth century before Christ. It is a strange coincidence that the two most radically developed languages in the world should be so ultra-conservative in their systems of spelling and writing.

Gathering up our observations in brief review, we find that, apart from minor tribulations, the English-speaking person has to contend with two main difficulties : a poly-lingual vocabulary of great variety and complexity, which imposes a considerable burden upon the memory, and a highly advanced and simplified grammar, which demands a good deal of ingenuity and intelligence.

CHAPTER FOUR

LANGUAGE AND SCIENCE

Languages are the keys of science.
Jean de La Bruyère.

If La Bruyère was right—and it would be difficult to contradict the French *savant*—we cannot hope to enter the Halls of Learning unless we are in possession of the key which, however, but opens the gate. The learned Dr. Johnson seems to have shared the Frenchman's conviction, for he made the pronouncement that "language is only the instrument of science", thus indicating that nothing can be achieved unless we first learn to grasp our instrument firmly, unless we know our tools most intimately. It is obvious, however, that the more complicated the instrument, the more time will be required before we can handle it properly, before the work in hand can be undertaken. If we consider the composition of the English language generally, it seems a foregone conclusion that the acquisition of scientific knowledge should prove a particularly hard task.

The lingual obstacles, which are impeding the advance of learning, are most prominent in the field of medicine. The student who endeavours to become a champion of health and a vanquisher of diseases soon discovers, sometimes with a shock, that medical knowledge cannot be acquired as quickly and directly as, let us say, the knowledge of history. The subject matter he is required to master is not presented to him in a language familiar to his ears, but in the guise of a professional jargon sustained by a most complex vocabulary which he must make his own, before he is permitted to proceed with his study. Attempting to learn the anatomy of the human body, he must acquire words like *diserticulum* (by-path), *ependyma* (outer garment), *epistropheous* (pivot), *mediastinum* (stand, middle), *panniculus* (little cloth), *trochanter* (pulley), to name a few that stand in his way, and he will have to blaze a trail through a jungle of terms like *extrarenal* (outside kidney), *exogenous* (produced outside), *infrahyoid* (below the

u-shaped or *hyoid* bone), *intracutaneous* (within, skin), *opisthognathous* (jaw behind), *semicartilaginous* (half, gristle), *laterocervical* (side, neck), and many more. Multicompounds such as *erythrocythemia* (red, cell, blood), *polyorrhomenitis* (much, serum, membrane), and hybrids such as *costochondral* (rib, cartilage), *posthepatic* (behind, liver) and *visceroptosia* (internal organs, following) will make him wonder whether he will ever hack his way through this dense undergrowth of foreign plants imported from a warmer clime.

If, however, the budding medico is a student of the Latin tongue, his task should not be a particularly formidable one, for some of the medical terminology will make sense, sound familiar, or at least release the right mental associations. On the whole, his "small Latin" is, however, bound to prove inadequate, since most of the medical expressions will remain "Greek" to him. Should he be able to read his Aristotle without difficulty in the original, his worries will be over, and he will feel very much at home in the *lingua medica*. He need merely reap the fruits of his classical labours. If he has no Latin and no Greek, he is compelled parrot-like to learn arbitrary names which, therefore, are mere tags attached to certain structures, physiological conditions, and states. Edward Gibbon (1737-94), the author of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, must have regretted that he had not learnt more Latin when he was at Westminster school, and later at Magdalene College, where he had spent fourteen months, which he himself describes as the most idle and unprofitable of his whole life, for after the publication of his History he attended a course on anatomy which made him groan, "the anatomist and the chemist may sometimes track me in their snow."

These difficulties which beset the path of the medical student have their cause in the development of European civilization. They are the price we have to pay for the passionate interest in health displayed by the ancient Greeks, who socratically tried to translate into practice their ideal of a perfect balance of physical and psychical life in every individual. To them health was not merely a hygienic but a cultural ideal, an attainment alike for doctor, trainer, philosopher, and priest. No wonder this attitude led to the foundation of medical science.

The temples of the Greek god of medicine, Asklepios, better known under his Roman name Æsculapius, became the first sanatoria of Europe. Strangely enough, Asklepios seemed to effect his divine cures by psychoanalytical means, for he revealed in a dream the cure to the afflicted person, who slept before his altar. Then the god of medicine was superseded by the father of medicine, the great Hippocrates, who graced the golden age of Pericles, and whose works became the main fountain of medical research, for he was convinced that illnesses resulted from natural causes. Very soon Greek medicine became identical with European medicine, for it was summarily adopted by the Arabs, Egyptians, and Romans.

Since the Greeks were the most renowned and most highly paid physicians in the Roman Empire, and as Roman medical nomenclature was practically non-existent, Greek terminology naturally became supreme. Moreover, the advantages of a mysterious professional jargon were also fully appreciated in the greatest empire of the ancients. The illustrious Galen, who dominated European medicine up to 1542, was born in A.D. 130, of Greek parents, and wrote his works in Greek.

The medical writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries merely followed in the Asklepiian footsteps of their predecessors and an example like that of Dr. George Cheyne's medical style can be looked upon as a typical expression of the contemporary medical mind. In his famous book *The English Malady* (1733), highly recommended by Dr. Johnson, that eminent Scottish physician and fellow of the Royal Society, writes: "A certain Degree of Heat, in the same Fomentation, will dissolve and dissipate a Tumor, and a higher Degree of it will harden and make it schirrous; and thus, Mercury, in moderate Dosis, will break, dissolve, and attenuate the Blood and Juices, whose Viscidity and consequent Compression on the Nerves, interrupt their Vibrations and Action, and so produce a Palsy which a gentle Salivation will remedy and antidote." Similarly, the famous friend of Pope and Swift, John Arbuthnot (1667-1735), who was physician-in-ordinary to Queen Anne and originator of the figure of John Bull, the typical Englishman, in his *Essay Concerning the Nature of Aliments* (1731) wrote: "Barley is emollient, moistning and expectorating . . . next to rice in wheat and bran of which is highly acescent and stimulating . . .

Millet is diarrhætick, cleansing, and useful in diseases of the kidneys. Pannick affords a soft demulcent nourishment, both for graniverous birds and mankind. Mays affords a very strong nourishment, but more viscous then wheat." Dr. Johnson's great admiration for the incomparable Dr. Arbuthnot, whom he hailed as "the most universal genius" of his age, perhaps explains Johnson's own predilection, if not obsession, for Greek and Latin terms, technical expressions, and scientific jargon.

Neither the nineteenth nor the twentieth centuries have changed this terminological course, though in the English-speaking sister country, the U.S.A., the position seems to be worse. The reviewer in the *Lancet* of M. C. Grow's book *Fit to Fly* finds that "it will probably be more widely read in the U.S. than here, because it contains much medical jargon unlikely to be familiar to young men in this country which may make it rather heavy going. Advertisers in America employ medical terms freely, and Americans are thus much more familiar with them than Englishmen". This, however, raises merely a difference of degree, because fundamentally the situation is the same over here and in America.

Charles Kingsley, in his immortal book *The Water-Babies*, pokes fun at the "true medical language" which, according to his diagnosis, consists of "one half bad Latin, the other half worse Greek, and (adding somewhat inconsistently) the rest what might have been English if they (the doctors) had only learnt to write it". He gives us a sample of this medical jargon in the doctors' report about the mental state of poor Mr. Ptthmlnsprts, Chief Professor of Necrobioneopalæonhydrochthonanthropopithekology, who was out of his wits for three months, because he had seen a water-baby. "And this is the beginning thereof—'The subanhypapop-supernal anastomoses of peritomic diacellurite in the encephalo digital region of the distinguished individual of whose symptomatic phænomena we had the melancholy honour (subsequently to a preliminary diagnostic inspection) of making an inspectorial diagnosis, presenting the interexclusively quadrilateral and antinomian diathesis known as Bumpsterhausen's blue follicles, we proceeded.' " Kingsley, however, discards at once the idea of introducing a prohibitory tax on words derived from three or more languages, because, after all, in a free country a man should have the right *not* to understand himself or to let others understand him.

The complication produced by this host of Latin and Greek medical terms in the English language can only be fully appreciated if we compare the position with that in other languages such as German, where a great number of ordinary popular terms are used as, for instance, *Blinddarmentzündung* (blind-gut-inflammation) for appendicitis, *Herzbeutelwassersucht* (heart-pouch-water-sickness) for hydrocardia, *Trommelfell* (drum-skin) for tympanum, *Zwölffingerdarm* (twelve-finger-gut) for duodenum, and hundreds more.

A scrutiny of chemical terminology reveals the same state of affairs : Greek, Greek, and more Greek. The reason, once more, is a historical one, because chemistry originated in the Middle East, in Egypt, and in Arabia, and was further developed in Greece. The word itself is probably derived from *khem*, an early name for Egypt, or the Arabic word *chema* (to hide), or in Greek χημεία (*chemeia*), meaning transmutation (of gold and silver) ; and thus *khem*, *chema*, and χημεία are indicative of the origination of modern chemistry. Through the Latin tongue, which had naturalized so many Greek words, Greek chemical terminology became general, and it is to be expected that it should appear in the language of Aristotle, since he, like most Greek philosophers, was in search of basic matter and fundamental ideas.

Thus, from terms like *menstruum universale* (the general solvent), *lapis philosophorum* (philosophers' stone), the terminology of Hermes Trismegistes, the atoms of Democritus, the *iatrochemical* nomenclature of Paracelsus, we gradually blend into the terminology of a Boyle, Priestley, Cavendish, Lavoisier, Dalton, and others who adhered to the ancient tradition of Greek and Latin or adopted hybrid termini technici. The subject index of any standard work on chemistry will bear witness to their numerousness, ranging from A-Z, from *abietic acid* to *zymurgy*. We can hardly take a step in chemistry without the emergence of words like *aluminofluorides*, *monads*, *sexivalent metals*, *polymeric series*, all resurrected from the time-stayed quarries of the ancient languages of the Romans and Greeks, and when the discoverer of thallium, Sir William Crookes, for instance, talks about " dinitroaniline, chloroxynaphthalic acid, which may be used for colouring wool in intense red ; and nitrophenylenediamine of chromatic brilliancy ", the average student gains nothing by protesting that he is an Englishman and not a

Greek. After all, even the enlightened layman is supposed to follow and to understand the developments of science. As a writer in the *Nineteenth Century* suggested: "The general depth of modern researches in structural chemistry must be explained, even to those who are not interested in the mystery of tryphencylmethans, the tetramethyldiamidobenzhydrols, and other similarly terrific terms used by chemists." Faced with tetramethyldiamidobenzhydrols the intelligent reader cannot even exclaim with the clown Costard, "thou art not so long by the head as *honorificabilitudinitatibus*: thou art easier swallowed than a flap-dragon," unless he regards them as a labour of love and not as love's labour's lost.

The Greeks, in their indomitable quest for fundamental truth, gazed into the stellar magnificence of their unclouded skies, trying to unveil the mystery of the universe, and so became our guiding stars in the science of astronomy. Thus, the Cyrenaic astronomer, geometer, grammarian, and philosopher, Eratosthenes (c. 276–c. 196 B.C.), introduced scientific chronology, measured the obliquity of the ecliptic and conceived a method of computing the circumference of the earth. And was not the Greek Hipparchus, 130 years before Christ was born, hailed as the greatest astronomer of antiquity and founder of scientific astronomy, who discovered the precession of the equinoxes, invented the planisphere, founded trigonometry, and catalogued over one thousand stars? Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemaeus) adhered to Greek astronomic tradition, which remained unbroken until 1543 when Copernicus (1473–1543) published his revolutionary work *De orbium coelestium revolutionibus*. No wonder the most majestic of all sciences still shows the shining traces of its ancient masters in the astronomical works of to-day.

Undoubtedly the Greeks had more than a word for the phenomena of the physical world, and the fame of great Greek minds in the field of physics lives on in many an English word, which only reveals its true and fundamental meaning when we consult the Greek scholar. After all, the Syracusan Archimedes (c. 287–212 B.C.), the most celebrated geometrician of his time, was the creator of the science of hydrostatics as well as the founder of scientific mechanics, and the Alexandrian physicist Ctesibios (c. 200 B.C.) produced the force pump and the water-clock, whilst the mathematician and inventor of "Hero's fountain", Heron of

Alexandria (c. 50 B.C.), wrote a book on the phenomena of light, and made numerous important experiments. Physics, naturally, appealed to the eminently practical and logical mind of the Romans, and it is not surprising to hear that we owe the oldest known treatise on engineering to the Roman tactician and engineer, Sextus Julius Frontinus (c. A.D. 40-103).

The clarifying and systematic brain of Greek thinkers also made zoology into a science, for we can hardly speak of zoology before the arrival of Aristotle, who focused his amazing powers of observation and generalization upon the animal kingdom. Some of the groups he suggested still hold their place in the most modern systems of zoological classification. Ælian's (Claudius Ælianus, third century A.D.) Greek work, known by its Latin title as *De Natura Animalium*, and Pliny's (A.D. 23-79) thirty-seven books of *Historia Naturalis* added nothing to the scientific nature of Greek zoological research, and even Albertus Magnus (1193?-1280) based his writings upon those of his revered master Aristotle and other ancient writers. This accounts for the many thousands of Greek and Latin names and terms used in modern zoology, the foundations of which were laid by John Ray (1627?-1705) and Francis Willughby (1635-72). The very term zoology is based on the Greek word for animal : zoon.

To what extent Greek and Latin ruled supreme in the realm of botany becomes quite clear when we look at a sentence from a scientific journal which reads : " Begoniaceæ, by their anthero-connectival fabric, indicate a close relationship with anonaceo-hydrocharideo-nymphæoid forms, an affinity confirmed by the serpentarioid flexuoso-nodulous stem, the liriodendroid stipules, and cissoid and victorioid foliage of a certain Begonia, and if considered hypogynous, would, in their triquetrous capsule, alate seed, apetalism and tufted stamination, represent the floral fabric of Nepenthes, itself of aristolochioid affinity, while, by its pitched leaves, directly belonging to Sarracénias and Dionæas." The reader of this " plain " botanical statement, provided he looks carefully, will find a few English fragments vaguely reminding him of the fact that he is reading an English work, and he will perhaps exclaim with Professor John Earle : " Why should we allow a pile of heterogeneous names to stand as a barrier between our people and the fairest gate of knowledge (botany). These strange names

are all but barren of interest in themselves ; what interest they possess springs wholly out of the objects they represent." It would, however, be difficult to deny the suitability of such phraseology, for though we could say *smooth*, *hairy*, *shaggy*, and *bristley*, and still convey our meaning as clearly as if we used the botanical terms, *glabrous*, *ciliated*, *hirsute*, and *hispid*, from the scientific point of view, the latter series of words is preferable, because their meaning is closely circumscribed by precise definition. The disadvantage of *glabrous* over *smooth* lies in its Latin derivation from Latin *glaber*, and the average person is easily misled to connect it with *glutinous*, *sticky*. Research workers of the Institute of Technology, New Jersey, found that the meaning of the word *glabrous* was practically unknown to the average reader, and so was *ciliated*, which botanically indicates the opposite of *glabrous*, for it means vibratile, hairlike, out-growths, suggesting to the Latin scholar the idea of eyelids with their eyelashes. *Hirsute*, from Latin *hirsutus* hairy, conveys a covering with long and stiffish hairs, whereas *hispid*, from Latin *hispidus* rough, carries the definition of a clothing with short, stiff hairs.

It was, however, not merely scientific expediency that demanded and created a specialized vocabulary, but once more the old story of the pioneering Greeks and Romans provides the explanation. The Greeks, who based their inquiry into plant life on the observation of the Chinese, Hindus, Chaldeans, and Egyptians, are the founders of the European science of botany (from Greek *botane* pasture), and the title of the "Father of Botany" was bestowed upon Aristotle's successor as the head of the Lyceum, Theophrastus of Eresos (c. 372-287 B.C.), who systematically described and classified five hundred specimens of plants. Dioscorides (c. A.D. 50), another Greek botanist, and M.O. in the Roman army, described some four hundred medicinal plants in his *Materia Medica*. These two Greeks, with the elder Pliny (23-79), who listed altogether one thousand plants, dominated the western world up to the sixteenth century. The Renaissance, with its revival of Greek learning, naturally favoured a Greek and Latin terminology, and the Swiss, German, and English herbalists of the sixteenth century duly availed themselves of it. The father of English botany was William Turner, who published his *New Herbal* in 1551. The Florentine Andreas Cæsalpinus, in his work *De Plantis* (1583), divided plants

according to seed and fruit into fifteen classes, whilst the Englishman, John Ray (d. 1705), with his *Historia Generalis Plantarum*, became the initiator of the "natural" system, based on the affinity of plants. In 1753 the Swedish naturalist and founder of modern *taxonomy* (plant classification), Carl von Linné, introduced the current method of binominal nomenclature, meaning that every distinct kind or species of plant or animal should be known by a scientific name, the name of the genus and that of the species. Thus, in *Brassica nigra*, common black mustard, *Brassica* is the generic and *nigra* the specific name. What would modern botanists do without Latin and Greek, having to deal with more than three hundred thousand distinct kinds and species of plants ! For them the languages of Aristotle and Pliny are not dead wood but living material.

On the other hand, it is hard lines on the average person who wants to know a little about the mystery of botany, or on the modern student who has "less and less" Latin and Greek. Even dictionaries solve the problem only reluctantly, because they are in themselves a hardly penetrable growth of treacherous Latin and Greek creepers tying up the inexperienced, ill-equipped explorer. His search for the meaning of *spadix*, for instance, would yield the information : *a racemose inflorescence elongated axis, sessile flowers, and enveloping spathe ; and endodermal rudiment of developing manubrium of certain Cœlenterates*. Most probably, he will have to look up the meaning of *racemose* branchlike, *sessile* sitting, *spathe* broad blade, *endodermal* within skin, *manubrium* handle, and *Cœlenterates* (literally) hollow-guts, before he fully understands the application of the word *spadix*. May be, our predilection for scientific terminology is carrying us too far, may be some facts and data could be expressed in native terms thus saving and gaining time which has become more and more precious in the acquisition of the ever-growing bulk of human knowledge. Without sacrificing scientific accuracy, we could say leaf-shedding for *deciduous* (Latin : *de* away, *cadere* to fall) ; down-leaves for *cataphylls* (Greek : *cata* down, *phyllon* leaf) ; cover-leaf for *bracteole* (Latin : *bractea* metal plate) ; round for *orbicular*, and kidney-shaped would be as clear, if not clearer, than *reniform* for, after all, the very idea of the word is to suggest the characteristic shape of a kidney, from Latin *ren* kidney, and *forma* shape. The

Germans, for instance, have produced some outstanding botanists, in spite of the fact that they do say in plain German : *pfeilförmig* (arrow-shaped) for *saggitate* ; *herzförmig* (heart-shaped) for *cordate* ; *speerförmig* (spear-shaped) for *hastate*, *schildförmig* (shield-shaped) for *peltate* ; *stengelumfassend* (stem-embracing) for *amplexicaul* ; *gekerbt* (notched) for *crenate* ; *fiederspaltig* (feather-cleft) for *pinnatifid* ; *netzförmig* (net-shaped) for *reticulate*, to name only a few when, after all, their " English " equivalents mean the same : *saggitate*, from Latin *sagitta* arrow ; *cordate* from Latin *cor* heart ; *hastate* from Latin *hasta* spear ; *peltate* from Greek *pelte* shield ; *amplexicaul* from Latin *amplecti* to embrace, and *caulis* stem ; *crenate* from Latin *crena* notch ; *pinnatifid* from Latin *pinna* feather, and *findere* to cleave ; *reticulate* from Latin *reticulum* small net, *rete* net. The *Cœlenterates* from Greek *koilos* empty ; and *enteron* intestines, in German are simply and descriptively called *Schlauchtiere* or " tube animals ", a word which provides the student with an associative help, which lightens the burden of memory.

In more abstract departments of science the desirability, if not necessity, of scientific terms is even greater, and the scientist who chooses words and notions used in everyday life does not help his reader, but rather confuses him, for as K. Pearson, in his *Grammar of Science* puts it, " concepts such as geometrical surface, atom, and ether, are not asserted by science to have a real existence in or behind phenomena, but are valid as shorthand methods of describing the correlation and sequence of phenomena." Unless we keep that in mind, we are only too readily inclined to project the ideal infinities and ideal eternities of conceptual space and time into the realm of actual perceptions. Thus, to choose an example, the sentence that F. J. W. Roughton " showed by a thermodynamical calculation that the catalysis of the hydrogen-peroxide equilibrium by the enzyme catalase might be quite enough to account for a certain phenomenon ", is not an obscure but a scientifically straightforward statement.

This survey of the field of science has shown very clearly that the general difficulties of the English language outlined in the initial chapter of this book are increased in the realm of science, because the percentage of terms borrowed from the classical languages is so much greater than in any other domain of spoken or written

English. As our difficulties are much greater than those of nationals of other countries, the question arises whether in an era of competition and rapid development and ever increasing demand for scientifically trained people, we can afford to be hampered by the very idiom which provides the key to progress and development.

It is, however, not the object of this book to advocate drastic changes in our attitude towards the English language, but simply to state its difficulties, to show its peculiarities, its virtues and vices, and how they affect and afflict the national civilization, and above all what their significance is as regards the average level of national culture.

It would be unfair, however, to conclude this chapter without pointing out that scientists and thinkers are not merely responsible for an increase in the difficulties of the English language through the introduction of a multitude of Greek and Latin words, but they have also helped to increase its clarity and precision. It should not be forgotten that many of the most ardent reformers of English were professional and amateur scientists, and we should recall the fact that towards the close of 1664 the Royal Society nominated a Committee to improve the English tongue and to demand from all their members "a close, naked, natural way of speaking, positive expressions, clear senses, a native easiness, bringing all things as near the Mathematical plainness as they can, and preferring the language of Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants, before that of Wits or Scholars".

CHAPTER FIVE

LANGUAGE AND POETRY

Choice word and measured phrase, above the reach of ordinary men.

W. Wordsworth, Resolution and Independence.

It is a serious matter indeed, if one's native language renders the acquisition of knowledge, which is the basis of training and the foundation of a career, difficult ; but it is a cultural disaster if the majority in a nation fails to appreciate its own literature, or, worse, looks upon it with indifference if not contempt. Once more the reason for this pernicious attitude will be found in the character of the literary vehicle, the English language as well as in the principles of English education, which should lay the foundation of literary appreciation and lead ultimately to the genuine enjoyment of literature by the adult mind.

For the average English reader the approaches to his literature are full of discouragement and irritating obstacles, because " almost every piece of English literature worth anything, till within the last fifty years, had been written by a man who had had a classical education ". This statement made by Professor G. E. B. Saintsbury (1845-1933), even if we accepted it with a fairly strong emphasis on the " almost ", implies that most authors were so strongly imbued with classical ideas that they quite naturally projected them into their works.

In the Middle Ages the situation was even worse, for most British authors wrote in Latin, and in the fourteenth century we find poets like Gower who composed their cantos in French and Latin. It seems a pity that two of " moral Gower's " main works should thus be lost to the monolingual English reader, though this regret should be far outweighed by the meteoric progress the English language made, when writers used to the excellencies of French and Latin at last decided to express themselves in their own native tongue. Accustomed to such high standards they refused to lessen

their achievement when using an inferior instrument. They had to muster all their ingenuity not to lower the standard but to raise the humbler vehicle of expression to an unprecedented nobility and effectiveness. That was only possible by liberal though not unreasonable loans from the relinquished foreign tongues. These were the conditions which made possible the sudden emergence of the thirteenth century summit, Geoffrey Chaucer, who wrote an *Astrolabe* for his son "Litell Lowis" in English, for "Latinne canstow yit but smaȝ". His real reason, however, was his natural attitude towards his own language. After all, so he argued, the Greeks wrote their works in Greek, the "Arabiens in Arabik, the Iewes in Ebrew, and the Latinfolk in Latin", so why should not he, an Englishman, write in his own native tongue and thus use a medium of expression familiar to all his countrymen, and be understood by all. Wordsworth, in a footnote, once observed "that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day".

Spenser (1552?-1599), too, helped to strengthen the home-grown vocabulary by preserving words which were being steadily driven out of the language by loans from foreign sources. Edward Kirke, in the Epistle to *The Shepheardes Calender*, makes a strong plea for Spenser's preservation of expressions found in Chaucer, Langland, and Malory, "that he hath laboured to restore as to theyr rightfull heritage such good and naturall English words, as have ben long time out of use and almost cleane disherited. Which is the onely course, that our Mother tonge, which truely of it self is both full enough for prose and stately enough for verse, hath long ben accounted most bare and barrein of both." He admits, however, that "they be something hard, and of most men unused, yet both English, and also used of most excellent authors and most famous poets". But Spenser was by no means a purist. He was in love with his mother tongue, and his archaist tendency was only one side of his artistic personality. It did not prevent him from borrowing quite a number of words from Greek and Latin, Italian and French, and turning them into English currency, for he too was the product of a classical education.

It is a truism that the development of English literature since Chaucer is unthinkable without the Mediterranean background, that ever since the Renaissance the classics have been the alpha

and omega of the grammar-school curriculum. The fact that Shakespeare was a product of this education is apparent not only in the choice of his plots but also in his vocabulary, which constitutes an additional difficulty for the average modern English reader, a difficulty that does not present itself to the reader of the "German Shakespeare". This is the reason why Shakespeare is more widely read and performed in Germany than in the country of his origin, and Shakespeare's popularity in German-speaking countries does not necessarily suggest a greater devotion to poetry, a deeper understanding of the greatest of all dramatists, or an altogether higher cultural level. It is due to the fact that the Germans appreciate Shakespeare in a translation which, as we shall see, has a twofold advantage over the original.

This rightly famous translation was made by the German Romanticists Schlegel and Tieck in the nineteenth century, that is more than three hundred years after the creation of the original work. The first complete edition appeared in 1833. Thus, the German reader has, first of all, the great advantage of a fairly modern and by no means archaic Shakespeare. Imagine for a moment, Shakespeare's plays could be recast in the language of Coleridge or Shelley! How many people would rush in to worship where now they fear to tread. Considering the rapid development of the English language, the situation is indeed a serious one. Dryden, sixty-three years after the death of Shakespeare, already felt that there was a need for a modernized Shakespeare because of the obscurity of certain passages. He complained about the lack of certainty in the English language. It is not standardized, he complains, and still lacking "a perfect grammar". "Yet it must be allowed to the present Age, that the tongue in general is so much refined since Shakespeare's time, that many of his words, and more of his phrases, are scarce intelligible. And of those which we understand some are ungrammatical, others coarse. And his whole style is so pestered with figurative expressions, that it is as affected as it is obscure."

That, however, is not the only difficulty the modern English reader has to face. As we have stated in Chapter Two, Shakespeare has often preserved the original Latin meaning, and although we are using the same words, we use them in a different sense. Thus, we are under the impression that we do understand, because we

"know" the word, though the original meaning evades us. When Hamlet talks about the "*extravagant spirit*" of his father, he does, of course, not wish to imply that he is a spendthrift ghost, but a disembodied soul outside the bounds of his grave. The Queen in *Hamlet* uses the word *excrements* in the Latin sense of hair, and also in Bacon's *Natural History*, "hair and nails are excrements and no parts". In Act IV, Hamlet, instead of *abscess* uses an ancient classical expression, "the *imposthume* of much wealth and peace," and when Polonius advises Laertes "to take each man's *censure*", *censure* means *opinion* and not *an expression of disapproval or blame*. There is no need to provide further examples to make clear this particular difficulty confronting the student of Shakespeare, for instances can be found in practically every scene of his plays.

Apart from the time lag between original creation and re-creation through translation, which gives the German-speaking peoples a rejuvenated Shakespeare, the equally important factor of the specific language difficulty must also be taken into account. Since English is an essentially bilingual tongue and German an essentially Germanic language, it stands to reason that any translation of an English work is necessarily a simplification. Even if we assumed a translation of Shakespeare's plays by a German contemporary—let us say, Martin Opitz (1559-1639), "the father of German poetry," who translated Barclay's *Argenis* (1626) and Sidney's *Arcadia* (1629), as well as Seneca and Sophocles into German—his Shakespeare translation would still make simpler reading for a modern German than the original for a modern English person. Naturally the nineteenth century translations being more modern are even simpler, and instances such as "*weakness* thy name is woman" instead of *frailty*, or "*shortness* is the soul of wit" for *brevity* can be found on every page of the Schlegel-Tieck translation. Though they are alterations, if not distortions, of the original, they are at the same time simplifications.

A re-translation of Shakespeare's rendering of one of the wittiest scenes in Hamlet may illustrate the degree of simplification which is unintentionally achieved by the far greater simplicity of the German language. It is the scene in which the fashionable courtier Osric informs Hamlet of Laertes' challenge in words that reflect and parody the affected "slang" used at Court. Hamlet, more amused than annoyed, "outslangs" Osric to such an extent that

even Osric is unable to comprehend his phraseology, when Hamlet says : " The concernancy, sir ? Why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath ? " Or : " what imports the nomination of this gentleman ? " Which in a re-translation of the translation reads : " The matter sir ? why do we allow the raw breath of our speech to pass over that gentleman ? " Or : " what is the meaning of the mentioning of this gentleman ? " Whereas Hamlet (Shakespeare) is purposely obscure in order to confound the foppish courtier, Schlegel interprets and simplifies and, therefore, mars the effect (compare Appendix A). But let a comparison of the original text with Schlegel's translation, in re-translation, speak for itself.

Enter Osric.

Osric : Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Hamlet : I humbly thank you, sir. Dost know this water-fly ?

Horatio : No, my good lord.

Ham. : Thy state is the more gracious ; for 'tis a vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile : let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess : 'tis a chough ; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osr. : Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. : I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use ; 'tis for the head.

Osr. : I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Ham. : No, believe me, 'tis very cold ; the wind is northerly.

Osr. : It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. : But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot, or my complexion—

Osr. : Exceedingly, my lord ; it is very sultry, as 'twere—I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head : sir, this is the matter—

Ham. : I beseech you, remember—

(Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.)

Osr. : Nay, good my lord ; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes ; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing : indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card of calendar of gentry, for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. : Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you ; though I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment I take him to be a soul of great article ; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction

of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. : Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. : The concernancy, sir ? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath ?

Osr. : Sir ?

Hor. : Is't not possible to understand in another tongue ? You will do't, sir, really.

Ham. : What imports the nomination of this gentleman ?

Osr. : Of Laertes ?

Hor. : His purse is empty already ; all's golden words are spent.

Ham. : Of him, sir.

Osr. : I know you are not ignorant—

Ham. : I would you did, sir ; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir ?

Osr. : You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is—

Ham. : I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence ; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Osr. : I mean, sir, for his weapon ; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.

Ham. : What's his weapon ?

Osr. : Rapier and dagger.

Ham. : That's two of his weapons : but, well.

Osr. : The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses : against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poinards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so : three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. : What call you the carriages ?

Hor. : I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

Osr. : The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. : The phrase would be more germane to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides : I would it might be hangers till then. But, on : six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages ; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this "imponed", as you call it ?

Osr. : The king, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits : he hath laid on twelve for nine ; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. : How if I answer "no" ?

Osr. : I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. : Sir, I will walk here in the hall : if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me ; let the foils be brought, the

gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can ; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Osr. : Shall I redeliver you e'en so ?

Ham. : To this effect, sir, after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. : I commend my duty to your lordship.

Ham. : Yours, yours. [*Exit Osr.*] He does well to commend it himself ; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. : This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. : He did comply with his dug before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same breed that I know the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter ; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions ; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

This scene which provides the last opportunity of "light relief" before the play reaches its tragic climax in re-translation reads :

Enter Osr.

Osr. : Welcome, your highness, here in Denmark.

Ham. : Thank you most humbly, sir. Do you know this midge ?

Hor. : No, my good lord.

Ham. : The better for your salvation (*lit.* hail) ; for 'tis a vice to know him. He owns much and fruitbearing land : if an animal is a prince of animals, his crib will be placed by the king's table. He is a magpie but, as I say, blessed with far flung possessions of dirt.

Osr. : Beloved prince, if your highness were at leisure, I should like to impart something from his majesty.

Ham. : I will receive it with all my attention, sir. Put your cap on its place ; it is for the head.

Osr. : I thank your highness, it is very hot.

Ham. : No, upon my word, it is very cold. The wind is northerly.

Osr. : Indeed, my prince, it is rather cold.

Ham. : But yet methinks, it is unusually close and hot, for my temperament—

Osr. : Extraordinarily so, my lord ; it is, as it were, very close, I cannot tell how. My lord, his majesty bade me to let you know, that he has laid a great bet on your head. Sir, the matter is as follows—

Ham. : I beg you, don't forget !

[Hamlet presses him to put on his hat.]

Osr. : Allow me, my good lord, for my own ease. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes, upon my honour, a perfect gentleman, of most excellent accomplishments, of pleasant conversation and splendid appearance. Indeed, to talk with sense about him, he is the model card of a refined manner of living, and you will see

in him the personification of all gifts a gentleman would wish to have.

Ham. : His description, sir, suffers no loss in your mouth though I know that it would upset the arithmetic (*lit.* art of reckoning) of memory to give a complete list of his qualities (*lit.* gifts), and yet it would be a rough one considering his nimble flight but, in the holiest seriousness of praise, I take him to be a mind of great scope and his inner gifts so precious and rare that, to express ourselves truly, only his mirror is like him, and he who follows in his footsteps, his shadow nothing more.

Osr. : Your highness speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. : The matter, sir ? why do we allow the raw breath of our speech pass over this gentleman ?

Osr. : Prince ?

Hor. : *Is't not possible to understand in another tongue ? You will do't, sir, really.* (This line is missing in Schlegel's translation.)

Ham. : What is the meaning of the mentioning of this gentleman ?

Osr. : Of Laertes ?

Hor. : His purse is empty already ; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. : Yes, the very same.

Osr. : I know you are not uninformed—

Ham. : I would you did know, sir, though, by my honour, it would not recommend me much. Well, sir ?

Osr. : You are not uninformed about the perfections Laertes possesses—

Ham. : I must not boast of these, not to compare my perfections with his ; to know another man thoroughly would mean to know oneself.

Osr. : I mean, sir, as far as the handling of weapons is concerned ; to judge by the reputation which he is given he is without a rival in them.

Ham. : What is his weapon ?

Osr. : Rapier and dagger.

Ham. : That would be two kinds of weapons ; but go on.

Osr. : The king, sir, has laid a bet of six Barbary horses, against which, as I hear, he has pledged six French rapiers with belongings such as girdle, hangers and so forth. Three of the carriages are indeed very pleasing to the eye, very much in keeping with their vessels, extremely delicate carriages and invented with great taste.

Ham. : What call you carriages ?

Hor. : I knew you would be enlightened even about his marginal remarks before this conversation was ended.

Osr. : The carriages are the hangers.

Ham. : The expression would be more suitable to the matter if we could carry a cannon by our sides ; so better let it be hangers. But go on : six Barbary horses against six French rapiers, their

belongings and three carriages invented with great taste ; that is a French bet against a Danish one. Why have they pledged this, as you call it ?

Osr. : The king, sir, has laid a bet, that in a dozen passes by both parties Laertes should not be more than three ahead of you ; he has laid his bet twelve to nine ; and it would come to a trial at once if your highness would be willing to answer.

Ham. : How if I answer " no " ?

Osr. : I mean, your highness, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. : I will walk here in the hall ; if it please his majesty, this is my hour of taking the air. Let the rapiers be brought ; if Laertes feels like it and the king holds his intention, I will win for him if I can ; if not I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

Osr. : Shall I declare this to be your opinion ?

Ham. : In this sense, sir, with trimmings after your taste.

Osr. : I commend my duty to your highness.

Ham. : Yours. [*Exit Osr.*] He does well to commend it himself ; there might be no mouth at his command.

Hor. : This lapwing has run away from his nest with half the eggshell on his head.

Ham. : He made arrangements with his mother's breast before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same breed with whom the tepid age is in love—only the tone of the fashion and the outward appearance of conversation ; a kind of fizzy mixture which leads them right through the most stupid and sorted-out opinions ; but try to breathe on them, and the bubbles burst.

If we consider that even this re-translation is, linguistically, more complex than the German version—for quite a number of the words used in German carry their own definition—we realize how much more difficult it must be for an English reader to find access to his greatest playwright than it is for a German, who enjoys the double benefit of a straightforward, self-evident vocabulary, and a language three hundred years nearer his own time. Moreover, the English reader and playgoer, though he may have the background of a classical education which makes him consciously bi- or trilingual, has to face the additional difficulty of archaism ; in short, the English speaking student of Shakespeare, whatever his educational background, has to overcome greater odds.

The injurious nature of this bilingualism is most eloquently presented in a poem by Samuel Rowlands (c. 1570-1630), a writer famous for his satires on the abuses of contemporary society. The commonplace incident of a " refined " personage meeting a country

lad who wants to know the time of the day and the way to the nearest town is couched in a language that clearly shows that its speaker has nothing in common with the wretched fellow but a few personal pronouns and a handful of auxiliary particles of speech :—

As on the way I itinerated,
A rural person I obviated,
Interrogating time's transitation,
And of the passage demonstration,
My apprehension did ingenious scan
That he was merely a simplician ;
So, when I saw he was extravagant,
Unto the obscure consonant,
I bade him vanish most promiscuously,
And not contaminate my company.

In this short poem, which makes us understand why Rowlands was one of the best hated men of his century, eighteen words, and they are by far the longest, were meant to be Greek to the " rural person ", if he should have read this highly literary account of his chance meeting with an urban cavalier. I venture to add a translation of this poem into plain English :—

As I walked along a lane,
I met a simple country swain,
Who said to me he'd lost his way,
And could I tell him time and day.
I saw at once, without a doubt,
That he was but a village lout ;
And when I heard his uncouth sounds,
I knew he'd gone beyond his bounds.
I told him he should beat it, quick,
Remove himself, or taste my stick.

The rural gentry of the seventeenth century would, however, have found no difficulty in Rowland's choice of words, for they were able to appreciate the language of that great writer of English prose, Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682). We owe it to them and his high regard for their intellectual capacity that Sir Thomas wrote his *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* (1646) in English and not, as he originally had intended, in Latin. " Our first intentions," so wrote the M.A. of Oxford university, D.Med. of Leyden and Oxford, " considering

the common interest of Truth, resolved to propose it (i.e. Pseudodoxia Epidemica) unto the Latine republicque and equal Judges of Europe, but owing in the first place this service unto our Country, and therein especially unto its ingenuous Gentry, we had declared ourself in a language best conceived." He warns his readers, however, " that the quality of the Subject will sometimes carry us into *expressions beyond meer English apprehensions.*" The author of *Religio Medici* was not unduly alarmed about the ever-increasing influx of foreign words, on the contrary, it suited his taste. He is certain, however, " if elegancy still proceedeth and English Pens maintain that stream we have of late observed to flow from many, we shall within few years be fain to learn Latine to understand English, and a work will prove of equal facility in either." On the other hand, he realizes that his language bars him from the people, or rather the people from the benefit of his writing, for he says : " Nor have we addressed our Pen or Stile unto the people (whom books do not redress and are incapable of reduction), but unto the knowing and reading party of Learning." He only desires to take notice of the response of those " whose experimental and judicious knowledge shall solemnly look upon it : not only to destroy of ours but to establish of his own ; not to traduce and extenuate, but to explain and dilucidate, to add and ampliate, according to the laudable custom of the Ancients in their sober promotion of learning ".

Even his admirer, S. T. Coleridge, who counts Thomas Browne among his " first favourites ", finds him " too often big, stiff, and hyperlatinistic " though he readily admits that he is " rich in various knowledge, exuberant in conceptions and conceits, contemplative, imaginative ; often truly great and magnificent in his style and diction ". How should the average reader cope with " a faraginous concurrence of all conditions ", or with " intellectual acquisition " that is " but reminiscential evocation ", when even a " lord of language " like Coleridge felt irritated. For Browne himself, the language he used with such sovereign power was simple enough, considering that he understood six languages as well as the patois of several provinces, and was, moreover, well versed in botany, astronomy, and philosophy, all branches of knowledge that were passed on to him through Latin and Greek standard works.

Though John Milton is two generations nearer to us than

Shakespeare, his great poem *Paradise Lost* is further removed from the average English reader than the tragedy of Hamlet. Why are *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* that were "every day a greater wonder" to John Keats, unexplored, if not unknown, regions to the English reader? Is the subject to blame? Then why is Joost van den Vondel's greatest work *Lucifer*, dealing with the same theme, a familiar classic to the Dutch nation, though it was published thirteen years before *Paradise Lost*?

The language of the "golden alchemist" of the English language is very difficult to read, his work is teeming with classical allusions and his syntax is modelled on the language of ancient Rome, his second mother tongue. Milton's work is bilingual; Vondel's masterpiece, the fruit of his old age, is monolingual, making use almost exclusively of Germanic roots, which are homely and familiar to the Dutch reader. The contrast in the basic nature of the two languages emerges sufficiently clearly when we read the Argument of Vondel's work and compare it with an English translation:

Lucifer, d'Aartsengel, opperste en doorluchtigste boven alle Engelen, hovaardig en staatzuchtig, uit blinde liefde tot zijn eigen, benijdde Gods onbepaalde grootheid, ook den mens, nar Gods beeld geschapen, en it het welig Paradijs met de heerschappij des aardbodems begiftigd. Hij benijdde God en den mens te meer, toen Gabriël, Gods Heraut, alle Engelen voor dienstbare geesten verklaarde, en de geheimenissen van Gods toekomende menswoorden hun ontdekte; waardoor het Engelsdom voorbijgegaan de waarachtige menselijke natuur, met de Godheid verenigd, een gelijke macht en Majesteit te verwachten stond; waarom de hovaardige en nijdige Geest, pogende zichzelf Gode gelijk te stellen, en den mens buiten den Hemel te houden, door zijne medestanders, ontelbare Engelen oprokkende, wapende, en tegen Michaël, 's Hemels Veldheer, en zijne heerkrachten, onangezien Rafaëls waarschuwing, anvoerde; en afgestreden, na de neêlaag, uit wrake den ersten mens, en in hem alle zijne nakomelingen, ten val brocht, en hij zelf met zijne weêrspanselingen ter Helle gestort, en eeuwig verdoemd werd.

This, in Noppen's English translation, reads:

Lucifer, the archangel, chief and most illustrious of all the angels, proud and ambitious, out of blind self-love envied God his boundless greatness; he also became jealous of man, made in God's image, to whom, in his delightful paradise, was entrusted the sovereignty of earth. He envied God and man the more when Gabriel, God's herald, proclaiming all angels to be but ministering spirits, revealed the

mysteries of God's future incarnation, whereby the angels being passed by the real nature of man, united with the godhead, might expect a power and majesty equal to God's own. Wherefore the proud and envious spirit, attempting to place himself on an equality with God, and to keep man out of heaven, through his accomplices incited to arm innumerable Angels, and lead them, notwithstanding Rafael's warning, against Michael, heaven's Field Marshal, and his legions ; and ceasing the fight, after his defeat, he caused, out of revenge, the first man, and in him all his descendants, to fall, while he himself, with all his co-rebels, was plunged into hell and eternal damnation.

Although he writes in pure Dutch, Vondel was by no means lacking in classical learning. He, like Milton, was profoundly influenced by the ancients, regarded Sophocles and Euripides as his models, and later on discovered Æschylus, but, unlike Milton, he never became a bilingual author. He was consciously a Dutch writer, who cultivated a noble diction and developed the latent powers of his mother tongue to the highest perfection. That is what Goethe did for Germany at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. He, too, was fascinated by the glory of Greece, by the splendour of Rome ; he, too, admired antiquity and was enamoured of the beauty of the Greek body and mind, but he was using a monolingual idiom in which he would speak also to those who had not been equipped with the languages of Homer and Virgil.

A keen interest in, and occupation with, the writers of Greek and Roman antiquity was certainly not an exclusive feature of English civilization, but whereas with other nations it remained more or less a separate domain, in Great Britain the national language constituted a reservoir into which Greek and Roman material, apart from the inevitable flotsam and jetsam of chance, could easily drift and be readily absorbed. No wonder that the great age of scholarship, which began in 1691 with Bentley's *Epistola ad Millium* and ended in 1825 with Dobree, left indelible impressions in the book of English letters. Its keynote was Attic Greek.

The response of the reading public must have been great, for how else could works like Pope's *Homer* have achieved their sensational success ? In the eighteenth century the translation of a Classic was not a mere labour of love but a remunerative occupation. C. J. Blomfield (1786-1857) was paid 100 guineas for his review of E. H. Barker's *Thesaurus*. Hampton received 250 guineas

for his *Polybius*, Musgrave was paid £200 for editing *Euripides*, and the great scholar Richard Porson (1759-1808), who "chose rather to read good Greek than to write bad" was offered—so the story goes—£3,000 for editing *Aristophanes*. The Greek ideal of beauty, however, was not always practised by its champions; Porson, for instance, did not strike Byron, who had met him in Cambridge, as an Apollo, but he described the great scholar as "a disgusting brute, sulky, abusive and intolerable", who could "hiccup Greek like a Helot", and Hazlitt found him "dressed in an old, nasty black coat with cobwebs hanging to the skirts of it and with a large patch of coarse brown paper covering the whole length of his nose, looking for all the world like a drunken carpenter".

The incarnation of the ardent desire for classical learning in the eighteenth century was Elizabeth Carter (1717-1806), that—if we may rely on Horace Walpole's sense of colour—most "darkly, deeply, beautifully blue" of the members of the blue-stockings circle. Though advised by her father, who was one of the six preachers at Canterbury, to give up attempting to master the classical languages, she prevailed by sheer will-power and enthusiasm. To overcome fatigue at night she took snuff, wrapped wet towels round her head and chewed green tea and coffee-beans. She succeeded and was praised by Dr. Johnson as one of the best Greek scholars he had ever known. This most learned lady, whose fame spread as far as Russia, became a glorious addition to Richardson's famous *Flower Garden of Ladies or Petticoaterie* and was consulted by him before he created the perfect man: *Sir Charles Grandison*. Her repute as a scholar was consolidated by £1,000, which she made out of her translation of *Epictetus*.

Pope's *Homer* translation (1715-26), which was welcomed with great enthusiasm, made him financially independent. Bentley's verdict "it is a great poem, Mr. Pope, but you must not call it *Homer*", contained a fair amount of truth, because Pope's knowledge of Greek was limited, and he had made full use of previous translations. Cowper published his *Homer* in 1791.

The interest in the classics was widespread and shared by a large section of the reading public, by nobility and gentry as well as by politicians. The younger Pitt was a good Greek scholar, and his rival Fox even surpassed him in this, and made the reading and

discussing of Greek writers a fashionable pastime in Whig circles. The Earl of Chatham (1708-78), educated at Eton and Oxford, in 1751 wrote to his nephew, Thomas Pitt, to imbibe "lessons of honour, courage, disinterestedness, love of truth, command of temper, gentleness of behaviour, humanity" by studying Homer and Virgil, drinking as deep as he could of "these divine springs".

It seems that the English educational system of the eighteenth century expected to derive as much moral uplift and ethical guidance from the study of the classics as the Chinese did from the assimilation of the Confucian classics, and even the fanatical utilitarians of the nineteenth century agreed that Latin and Greek were the indispensable accomplishments of "the physician, the divine, the scholar, the senator, and the statesman".

The public schools were the homes and strongholds of classical teaching and were imitated by all teaching establishments. Some of the products of these schools attained such facility and elegance in classical versification that they attempted translations into Latin and Greek. The most remarkable achievement was the translation of William Mason's *Caractacus* (1781) and John Milton's *Samson* (1788) into Greek tragedies, chorus and all, by Henry Glasse, who took Holy Orders and killed himself in 1809 after having dissipated a considerable fortune.

The eighteenth century writer Vicesimus Knox informs us that "the gay, the sprightly, the voluptuous Anacreon is known to every reader". Thus, Thomas Moore started a most successful literary career on the right note by translating him in his undergraduate days at Dublin. The work of Cowley, Collins, and Gray we connect with that of Pindar, who was one of the four ancient poets admitted by Pope to his *Temple of Fame*, and what could be a better illustration of the close friendship between the English and the classical muses than the summing up of the era of Pope and Addison as the Augustan Age?

Thus, the Olympian torch has been passed on from poet to poet. Collins, steeped in Greek literature, exclaims in his *Ode to the Passions* :

"O bid our vain Endeavours cease,
Revive the just Designs of Greece."

and Joseph Warton pleads: "O bid Britannia rival Greece." Peacock gets never tired of displaying his classical learning, and

his *Rhododaphne* filled Shelley with admiration for its author's erudition. Shelley's world of ideas was undoubtedly guided and inspired by Plato's works, some of which he translated, and his *Epipsychidion* is unthinkable without the influence of the greatest pupil of Socrates. Greek literature, in Shelley's mind, was synonymous with absolute perfection, and when he went to his watery death he was accompanied by two volumes : the plays of Sophocles and the poems of the Hellenist Keats.

Byron himself confessed that all that was good in his poetry was inspired by Greece, and of Aeschylus' *Prometheus* he says : " It had always been so much in my mind that I can easily conceive its influence over all or anything that I have written," and what was Byron's knowledge of Greek literature but the outcome of his public school education ?

How was it then possible for the average reader to find access to poets so intimately and profoundly connected with and rooted in classical tradition ? That was the question Wordsworth and Coleridge asked themselves in 1798, and they found that poetry in the Augustan Era had drifted away from the people, that the chasm between poet and nation was becoming wider and wider. They decided to build a bridge made of words used " in the middle and lower classes of society ", and to break away from the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers ". It is obvious that " incidents and situations from common life ", if they are described " in a selection of language *really* used by men ", are easily understood by the average reader, thus widening the circle of readers considerably instead of narrowing it as poets do who, according to Wordsworth, " indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes, and fickle appetites of their own creation," and thus " separate themselves from the sympathies of men ". Wordsworth opposes a so-called poetic diction that thrusts out of sight " the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas ". He deplores Dr. Johnson's transformation of *Proverbs*, chapter vi, into :

Turn on the prudent Ant thy heedless eyes,
Observe her labours, Sluggard, and be wise ;
No stern command, no monitory voice,
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice ;

Yet, timely provident, she hastes away
 To snatch the blessings of a plenteous day ;
 When fruitful Summer loads the teeming plain ;
 She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.
 How long shall sloth usurp thy useless hours,
 Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy powers ?
 While artful shades thy downy couch enclose,
 And soft solicitation courts repose,
 Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,
 Year chases year with unremitted flight,
 Till Want now following, fraudulent and slow,
 Shall spring to seize thee, like an ambush'd foe.

Then Wordsworth tells us to pass from " this hubbub of words " to the original.

" Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise : which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard ? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep ? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man."

The poetic theories of Wordsworth, and more so his poetry, though they met with violent opposition, exerted a certain amount of influence upon his contemporaries, but his ideas did not of course eliminate or even silence the classical tendencies in English literature. Wordsworth himself hardly expected it and was quite satisfied with the recognition of his own work. Classical education was too powerful a force in the nation, and so Dr. Johnson's influence was not wholly eradicated before 1835. So we find Keats, whose gaze was held by the splendour of an Attic heaven and its glorious gods ; and that proud challenger and jealous defender of his own independence, Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864), who had his artistic roots in Pindar and Lucian. He was spiritually so akin to the ancient world that E. B. Browning rightly described him as " the most classical of living writers because the freest from mere classicalism, the most Greek because pre-eminently and purely English ".

Macaulay, too, was a champion of a classical education, firmly convinced that an extensive acquaintance with ancient literature was essential to enlarge and enrich the mind. " It is unquestionable," he says, " that a man whose mind has been thus enlarged

and enriched is likely to be more useful to the state and the church than one who is unskilled, or little skilled, in Classical learning."

It is the same story over and over again: Latin and Greek, Greek and Latin. Towards the end of the nineteenth century we meet one of the most amazing examples of classical verbalism in the curious and unique shape of Baron Corvo (i.e. Frederick William Serafino Austin Lewis Mary Rolfe). He invented expressions like *tygendis* or *technikrym*, *tolutiloquent*, *contortuplication*, *fumicables*, *zaimph*, *aseity*, *purrothrixine*, *banaysically*, words which are a permanent worry to his commentators. One writer suggested that the word *precipitevolissimevolmente*, which he loved so much, should have been made his literary epitaph. His "orchidaceous" style is, however, not entirely classical, but also colloquial, Early Italian, Anglo-Saxon, Cockney, and Periclean. This forerunner of James Joyce did work with a Greek dictionary at his elbow and a Latin one within easy reach, whenever he found that his mother tongue was, after all, not rich enough. No wonder he sometimes breeds strangely exotic flowers. In his translation of J. B. Nicolas' French version of *Umar Khaiyam* he uses *methystine lake* for *ivresse*, *haimaterose heart* for *coeur ensanglanté*, *saprous bones* for *os putrifés*, all of which goes to show that the spirit of Dr. Johnson was still haunting the flesh of twentieth-century authors. The eccentric features in the style of this would-be "lord of language" are unthinkable without his grammar-school background and his fascination with Roman Catholicism. He would have provided William Wordsworth with an even better case of an author who preferred splendid isolation and extreme individualism to social effectiveness and warm human contact.

Is it possible to do full justice to Robert Bridges without sharing his educational background? The aged author of *The Testament of Beauty*, which he himself called his D.H.N. (i.e. *De Hominum Natura*), owed his initiation into poetry to Horace, whom he read when he was a small boy at Eton. Alone, the titles of the main works of the former Poet Laureate reveal more than anything his indebtedness to the ancients: *Prometheus* (1883), *Eros and Psyche* (1885), *Nero* (1885), *The Feast of Bacchus* (1889), *Achilles in Scyros* (1890), *The Return of Ulysses* (1890), *Demeter* (1904). His last work and testament is most fittingly preceded by Virgil's words: *Me vero*

primum dulces ante omnia Musae quarum sacra fero ingenti percussus amore accipiant.

Last but not least there is James Joyce, who enjoys not only German, Italian, French, Russian, and Spanish puns, but also Latin and Greek ones, such as : *pontofacts massimust*, or *the eiligh ediculous Passivucant (glorietta's inexcellsiored !)* : *for irkdays and for folliedays till the comple anniums of calendarias, gregoromaiois and gypsyjuliennes*, and many others. Sometimes he commits Germanic suicide in a string of Romance words, as in the passage : *In regimentation through liberal donation in co-ordination for organization of their installation and augmentation plus some annexation and amplification without precipitation towards the culmination in latification*, etc.

The position, therefore, of the common reader of English literature who is not equipped for the task seems—with some rare exceptions, such as the Bible, Bunyan, Blake, Wordsworth, and a few other voices crying in the wilderness—hopeless. To him who has no Latin and no Greek reading tends to be irritating, for he is either annoyed with his author's classicizing, or chagrined with his own ignorance in these matters. There is always a suspicion that one does not fully understand Shelley without having read Plato, a problem which, by the way, can be easily solved with the help of a good translation.

Keats, for instance, is steeped in the ancient poets and seems more at home in Attica than in his own country, and yet Keats was not a Greek scholar. His Hellenism was indirectly acquired, chiefly inspired by Spenser and Milton, and his contact with Greek art. He was a Greek intuitively rather than intellectually. He made an energetic attempt to learn the language, but soon gave up, and without loss to English poetry. Thus, the case of Keats shows one way out of the difficulty that confronts the common reader of English literature, though it should be added that Keats was by no means a "common reader" but a magician of the word.

Is it then impossible to find an avenue that will lead out of this impasse, or is the average English reader—and are those who never even become readers, because they could not cross the language bar—condemned to remain the puzzled onlooker of a Nō-drama or the mystified spectator of a sacred Hindu temple-dance, both comprehensible to the initiated only? The problem is a most

serious one, for it is detrimental to a broader distribution of civilization. It tends to generate an intellectual and aristocratic culture that is not organically linked with the people, but leads a separate and isolated existence in a vacuum not respected and revered by them but blindly dismissed as "high-brow".

How can we meet and deal with the euphuism of the Elizabethan age, the hyper-Latinism of a Sir Thomas Browne, the snobbery of Johnsonese, and the cryptic anarchism of a James Joyce? How can we open the imperial playgrounds of literature to letterless people so that they shall not be lost in the maze of a complex language? How can we transmute the distant view, however enchanting, into a true vision of poetic reality?

CHAPTER SIX

THE SOCIOLOGICAL ISSUE OF HIGH-BROW AND LOW-BROW

Cassius : *Did Caesar say anything ?*

Casca : *Ay, he spoke Greek.*

Cassius : *To what effect ?*

Casca : *Nay, and I tell you that I'll ne'er look you i' the face again : but those that understood him smiled at one another and shook their heads ; but for mine own part, it was Greek to me.*

Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, Act I, ii.

*While words of learned length and thund'ring sound
Amazed the gazing rustics rang'd around.*

Goldsmith, The Deserted Village.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), who has left his mark on the cast of the English language, fulfilled a useful purpose, when he fought against euphuism and obscurantism in trying to make *sense* the goal of the responsible writer. There were, indeed, many words in the seventeenth century that " though of magnifiquè sound, yet like windy blisters of a troubled water have no sense at all ". Thus, the author of *The Leviathan* (1651), like the poets of the *Lyrical Ballads* a century later, championed the course of the average reader ; but he went too far, and in his endeavour to counteract metaphysical vagueness, lost himself in the maze of the logical, intellectual pattern, desiccating the main springs of creative intuition.

He drifted away from poetry, he abandoned art and true spirituality, and dedicated himself to a simple, unmetaphorical language that neither contained nor suggested revelation. An enraged and apparently very learned Scotsman—so we are informed by John Laird—described Hobbes as " a Cerinthian, a Mohometan, an Anthropomorphist, a Manichæan; a Tertullianist, an Andæan, an Arian, a Sabellian, a Montanist, probably a Priscillianist, a Sadducee, an Arabian, a Luciferian, an Originist, a Tacian, a Jew and a Socinian ". Doubtlessly, Hobbes, endowed with such a multifarious and almost Orson Wellsian personality must have felt

flattered, and at the same time sufficiently strengthened to ward off, if necessary, an entire clan of commentators.

Thomas Hobbes, great and impressive as he was, could, however, not be described as a culturally complete personality, for though he realized the importance of science and intellect, he failed to understand the function and meaning of poetry; yet, the influence of Hobbes can be detected in the trend of modern civilization, particularly in the nineteenth century, with its bias for science, an attitude that was bound to upset the balance of the general cultural development of mankind.

This conflict between intellect and spirit was very keenly felt by the great Charles Darwin, who in his later years had lost his former appreciation of poetry and was unable to read a line of it. When he tried to read Shakespeare, whose works had once given him "intense delight", he "found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated" him. To increase his inner dilemma, he had almost lost his "taste for pictures and music", which in his former years had been his "very great delight". Darwin was greatly upset by this "curious and lamentable loss of the higher aesthetic tastes", for he realized that it amounted to a considerable "loss of happiness . . . possibly injurious to the intellect and, more probably, to the moral character by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature". What a pathetic and yet brave admission of failure in a truly great man, too rigid, however, in his intellectual pursuits to bring about a change. "If I had to live my life again," he exclaims in his autobiography, "I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week; for the parts of my brain now atrophied would thus have been kept active through use."

This atrophy or starving of the mind is a much more serious matter than most people realize, for it has far reaching sociological consequences and divides the nation into "high-brows" and "low-brows", which is a much greater evil than economic class distinction.

The psychological reaction to this chasm is a most pernicious one, for one section of the "culturally deprived" develops a sense of inferiority which leads to blind acceptance of and submission to the "superior" set, whilst the less self-effacing and more spirited low-brow, in order to preserve his self-respect, scorns that which is

beyond his grasp and declares it to be inferior and not worth having. Thus, the conception of the "high-brow" is conveniently established as : a person affecting intellectual superiority.

Again and again in army education I have come across men who sincerely believed that a person who enjoys "the higher things of life" is merely pretending, and is actually as bored as the low-brow, though unlike the "honest" low-brow refuses to admit it. The fact that such people do exist, visiting galleries and enduring the *Götterdämmerung* at Covent Garden or Toscanini's rendering of the Ninth over the air from Milan, is quite sufficient evidence for the inveterate low-brow to dismiss all "culture" as decadent or Bolshevik. The intellectual is branded "high-brow", and so-called higher civilization is pilloried as social snobbery, and the vague and strangely disquieting feeling that the contemplation and acquisition of these higher things might be a responsibility in the accomplishment of the human status is conveniently suppressed.

Unfortunately the conscious "low-brow" need not possess the sharpened sensibility so easily generated by an underlying inferiority feeling to find plenty of sticks to feed the fire of his righteous indignation. In spite of his lack of education he can often see through the pretension and affectation of a "superior set" as a child sees through, and intuitively sizes up, a presumptuous grown-up or a pretentious teacher who falls short of the personal and intellectual requirements of his position. There is no lack of half educated or badly trained people who are not so much interested in what they say, as in how they say it, who prefer to express themselves prettily or preciously rather than correctly. They are bound to lose themselves in a desolation of verbiage, and there are those who try to establish their superiority through the intermittent use of a foreign tongue. They believe that "to smatter French is meritorious" and are the modern adherents of a fashion which prevailed in the seventeenth century and was ridiculed by Samuel Butler (1612-1660) in his *Satire Upon Our Ridiculous Imitation of the French* and by John Dryden (1631-1700) in his play *Marriage-a-la-Mode* (1672). In this comedy Doralice, who delights in newly imported French words, is made to say : "To do you service then, we will *prendre* the *Carrosse* to Court, and do your *Baise mains* to the Princess Amalthea, in your phrase *Spirituelle*." No wonder Dryden exclaims with Palamede : "Hay

day ! *Grand mond ! conversation ! voyag'd ! and good graces !* I find my Mistris is one of those that run mad in *French* words."

There are others, and they are as numberless as the sands, who are mortally afraid to call a spade a spade because that would be the natural word, and to be natural, in their eyes, would be common, and by this declension they would fall into the pit of vulgarity. The tendency to translate an ordinary word as it spontaneously emerges in the brain of the " genteel " speaker into a " genteel " expression gradually becomes a well-conditioned reaction, an almost automatic habit. The English language, with its abundance of synonyms, is an ideal hunting ground for such persons, with the difference that they are not hunters but poachers, who are not even aware of their offence. Once this has become an established habit the genteel expression springs from the brain without intermediate association, and the capacity for a natural conception of thought is lost, or at least seriously impaired.

It is very difficult to cure such people of their vice, for they are usually " as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile ", and inclined to retort in Mrs. Malaprop's words : " Sure, if I reprehend anything in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs."

Once more the nature of the language bar problem is characteristically revealed, for the synonyms replacing the ordinary word are almost exclusively gathered from the Romanic branch of the English language. This procedure is to be expected, since it is a proficient knowledge of this very branch that suggests, or is meant to create the impression of, a higher educational standard.

A short list of such stylish but incongruous words will recall many more to the mind of the observant listener or reader :

proceed	for go
sufficient	for enough
lingerie	for underclothing
edifice	for building
college	for school
dentifrice	for toothpowder
serviette	for napkin
expectorate	for spit
accommodation	for room
obtain	for get
beverage	for drink

collation	<i>for</i> meal
evince	<i>for</i> show
comestible	<i>for</i> food
assist	<i>for</i> help
peruse	<i>for</i> read
inquire	<i>for</i> ask
preserve	<i>for</i> jam
endeavour	<i>for</i> try
odour	<i>for</i> smell
extend	<i>for</i> give
proboscis	<i>for</i> nose
scholar	<i>for</i> school boy

This irritating habit of incongruous circumlocution which is supposed to produce the effect of originality very often is merely a stop gap covering up the intermittent vacuity in the mind of the speaker or writer. This habit tends to increase the difficulties of English for the less educated, because the "genteelist" makes orientation even harder when he shifts the meaning of useful words by blurring or distorting their original sense. Although the confirmed "low-brow" despises the addict to genteelism, he cannot avoid acquiring a number of these words in their distorted sense. Moreover, he is inclined to confuse such pretenders with the genuine intellectual or "high-brow" who also uses these words but correctly.

The uneducated person, however, who is not sure whether he likes to be a "low-brow" but secretly admires the high-brow and tries to emulate him is fascinated by an intellectual choice of words. As the expressions he picks up are mostly of Romanic or Greek descent with roots that mean nothing to him, he is guided only by his own imperfect judgment of their proper usage, which in reality may cover but a fraction of it; or he adopts a word with a limited range of application and applies it as a general term, thus misrepresenting or changing its exact meaning.

Let us assume the word *dilemma* attracts the attention of some low-brow word fancier who, after having heard and read it a number of times, comes to the conclusion that it can only mean *difficulty*. If he were an intelligent word observer he would soon find out that the "high-brow" also uses the word *difficulty*, that *dilemma* and *difficulty* are therefore not necessarily synonymous. Further investigation would then reveal what as a rule he never suspects,

that a dilemma is a difficulty of a peculiar nature, a difficulty with two horns : that the dilemma situation offers two or more solutions which, however, strike us as impossible ones, because they are equally distasteful, unfavourable, or unsatisfactory, that, in short, our choice lies between two or several evils. A slipshod application of the word dilemma would make this difficult word of ours even more difficult than it is. A person who discovers that he has not enough money to pay his bus fare is in a difficulty but not in a dilemma, since he can either walk home or ask the nearest policeman on point duty for a loan of half a crown. The Greek word δῖλημμα (dilemma) contains no element of guidance to the uneducated, and as far as he is concerned it might mean an illness, a state of mind, a peculiar kind of Emma, or soap, or any chance object. The classical scholar, however, is informed by the word δια (dia) between and λῆμμα (lemma) a thing taken, from λαμβάνειν (lambanein) to take, and realizes that a dilemma always offers an alternative.

Psychologically, the position of the "low-brow" is made worse by a certain type of high-brow who, consciously or unconsciously, takes his revenge when he condemns *all* "low-brow" stuff as common, ludicrous, and degraded rubbish, not even worthy of his critical negation. In this manner an educational issue which is fundamentally cultural and undoubtedly connected with political and economic problems is side-tracked and made into one which is predominantly social-economic. If this were a fact, economic impoverishment would transform a cultured person into a low-brow, and a sudden windfall would lift a poor man into a world of cultural and æsthetic values. The number of people, however, who regard this feud with greater detachment is on the increase. A person who can submerge himself in the tone waves of the Pastoral Symphony or Bela Bartok's *Concerto for Orchestra*, need hardly look down upon or be jealous of the man who, after all, has only purchased two hours' worth of boredom with his orchestra stall, and the Shakespeare enthusiast, up in the gods, should rather feel sorry for the lady who allows herself to be bored to tears by Ralph Richardson and Lawrence Olivier, because she cannot face her next party without having seen at least the first, if not the second, part of *King Henry the Fourth*. The low-brow as well as the high-brow should keep in mind that neither the arrival in a

magnificent Rolls Royce nor a down-at-heels appearance in corduroy trousers are a guarantee for the æsthetic appreciation of the paintings of Pablo Picasso or Meindert Hobbema, the music of Giovanni Palestrina or Benjamin Britten, and the poetry of T. S. Eliot or Rainer Maria Rilke.

But somebody might argue that the average person is neither a Hobbes nor a Darwin, that the man in the street is unlikely to possess their poetical and artistic sensibilities, either undeveloped or atrophied. Up to a point this is true, but though we may not share their excellencies, their intellectual power and spiritual aspirations, we may share their deficiencies and shortcomings, their cultural dilemma. We may either, like the author of *Behemoth, or the Long Parliament*, be unconscious of what we are missing and therefore feel inclined to dismiss the whole matter of artistic appreciation as irrelevant or, like the author of *The Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection*, we may bitterly regret and resent the intellectual and spiritual deprivations we unwillingly have to endure.

The first point of view, or rather state of mind, is illustrated by the statement of a man in the street when he said to a mass observation interviewer: "Do you mean them crackbrained blokes who write them books? no I never read them for years since I was a kid, they do things I know, what should we know about it anyways, not in my line, chum." This young man of thirty is a typical specimen of the confirmed and indifferent low-brow who dismisses things he does not understand with a shrug, often with contempt and a most colourful display of bad language. There is, on the other hand, the young man of twenty-six who was interviewed by the same observer whose utterances are a characteristic expression of the Darwin attitude. "They do a lot of talking, it's not for the likes of us," he said: "Blimey, we don't know what they're going to do next. Be a good thing if everybody had a good education, then we'd know what they're getting at." They belong to an incomprehensible world which has nothing to do with *us*. He feels that he is an outsider, and always will be, that he does not belong, and he admits with a certain amount of regret but without defiance and vituperation that he cannot understand the language of the other set. He has a vague feeling, a faint hope, that there is a bridge to span the gulf, but to him it is useless, for he does not know

how to cross it. Even if he wanted to read " high-brow " books, he would not understand their meaning, because he would not understand their idiom. If the pattern is unintelligible, the most interesting matter is bound to be boring, and the most beautiful music must sound like a mere jumble of noises, if the pattern is undiscernible. The parts must fall into their proper place and must be recognized and inter-related, either consciously or unconsciously, before *meaning* can enter the mind.

Some people think that appreciation of art, literature, and music is simply a matter of " standard ", that you appreciate and enjoy, because you have reached a general height which enables you to survey the whole field of cultural achievement, that the low brow is a low-brow, because he is not in possession of the *standard*. We are inclined to forget that a standard is the result of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual endeavour and effort spread out over many years, that it is the gradual assimilation of a mass of details and intricacies, that critical faculty and judgment and taste are a very complex growth, and their acquisition partly, or even to a large extent, due to hereditary influences.

The fact, for instance, that we appreciate and listen with discernment to classical music does not mean that we can do justice to a Debussy whose work may be still inaccessible, in spite of our otherwise high musical standard, that is to say : music of a high standard can be as strange and meaningless to a high standard listener as accepted high-brow music is to a low-brow. Therefore, there is a connection between the ignorant and the initiated, who otherwise seem to inhabit different cultural climates. When both the hot music and swing fan and the Beethoven worshipper listen to Chinese music or the music of India they will be equally puzzled and helpless, since their musical standards are not absolute but acquired, and in that particular case, equally inadequate. For once the high-brow and the low-brow find themselves in complete agreement of condemnation. The alien music of most elaborate design, full of subtlety and refined beauty is lost on either of them, and relegated to the category of unpleasant, disturbing, or even irritating noise. The low-brow as well as the high-brow standards are suddenly reduced to no standard, for they are not in possession of the key that would open to them an unknown temple of musical beauty, and as they do not understand, they are totally unable to

discern between that which is good and that which is bad, between, let us say, high standard and inferior quality in Chinese music.

I remember the conversation of two soldiers in a railway compartment, one of whom had picked up at the station bookshop a copy of *New Writing* and had been trying to read it. He seemed utterly bewildered, for he, too, was without the key. The story was written in an idiom supposed to be his mother tongue, and yet he could make nothing of it. As he was not willing to admit that he might be lacking in understanding and training, he declared that the book was the most awful tripe, and that he had wasted a bob on something that was utterly worthless. This accidental acquaintance of the soldier with a modern work most probably would have "weaned" him from all further contact with modern literature. My arguments, however, convinced him that he had been hasty, because he had undertaken a task for which he was inefficiently equipped, that he was trying to do a job without being in possession of the required tools. Our conversation had, of course, not changed or even improved his standard of literary appreciation, but it had changed his attitude and therefore had moved the matter within his range and thus made it possible, ultimately, if he should make the attempt, to alter his standard. A bridge had been built which would enable him one day to reach the other side. Bridge-building of that kind is the most important problem in the realization of adult education, perhaps in all education.

The most successful bridging of the gulf between the people who received an elementary education only and those who enjoyed a higher education at a secondary school or a university was done by the apostles, organizers, and pioneers of the People's Colleges of Scandinavia, for it can now be said of Denmark and her northern neighbours that adult education has penetrated the whole nation, that there is no longer a segregation into high-brows and low-brows. Whereas Great Britain, with its 48 millions possesses only 9 residential colleges for adults with a peace-time enrolment of about 300 students, Norway (3 millions) has 32, Finland (3½ millions), 53, Sweden (6 millions), 59, and Denmark (3½ millions), 60, looking after the intellectual, spiritual, and physical needs of over 12,000 students.

It is a universally accepted fact that the Scandinavian states are models of democratic life, and it is no secret that their achievements

in the democratic field are most intimately connected with their outstanding system and practice of adult education. A comparative study of the general condition in Denmark before and after the inauguration of the People's College will clearly reveal the transformation brought about by that educational and cultural institution.

As the initiators and founders of the People's Colleges insisted on the use of the living word, this particular bridge was chiefly made of words—as in the case of most bridges in the streamland of civilization, which linked the past with the present, and the present with the future—written words mainly, the images and shadows of ideas which give them perpetual life. This task demands skilful engineers, for the banks which are to be connected are not always on the same level, and its fulfilment is most essential, if we desire to build up a homogeneous civilization. The bridge between the high-brow and low-brow landscapes must be established; and that can only happen through the power of the word.

It was, of course, easier for Scandinavia than for Britain to become the powerful vanguard of adult education in Europe, because the Scandinavian languages, as we have seen, are pure languages with words that are mostly self-evident and therefore offer no obstacle to the average brain. The fact, however, that our task is so much more difficult must not deter us, for every citizen is, above all, entitled to his national language. Without the achievement of a fair degree of efficiency in it he cannot hope to fulfil his functions as a citizen, for he can neither fully enjoy his civic rights and privileges, nor carry out his civic duties in a democratic state.

The first and foremost obligation of a democratic citizen is that towards the word, the spoken, but, above all, the written word, for a democracy demands that its adherents should be well informed. Without information there is no opinion, and without an enlightened public opinion a democratic form of government can only be a half-hearted affair.

The information services, press, radio, literature, and films are, of course, available to almost everybody, and we are, under normal competitive conditions, free to choose the newspaper we care to read, with the proviso that our choice is conditioned by our educational background. One never finds the man in the street engrossed in the columns of *The Times*, and hardly ever has he purchased the

Manchester Guardian or the *Daily Telegraph*, papers which, apart from quality, fulfil one vital condition : that of quantity, the bulk of news without which we cannot claim to be well-informed, a quantity which at best covers the fringe of events happening in a world of ever-increasing complexity.

Is the man in the street deterred by the price of these papers, 3d., 2d., and 1½d. ? He could afford them nowadays, or, if he wished, could consult them in the newspaper room of public libraries. There is always a customer in front of the *Daily Mirror*, and you may see somebody impatiently fingering *The Times* simply because it happens to be its neighbour, and he is merely waiting for the other fellow to relinquish his position. Has he never tried to make the acquaintance of the " Thunderer " ? Oh, yes, he has, but there was something that stopped him from turning his attempt into habit : its language. The difficulties he encounters there are too great, and language ceases to be a bridge, and becomes a breach in the wall of national continuity. Let us assume he wishes to read a well-informed and lengthy article on the conditions in Trieste likely to contain interesting, first-hand information, and he comes across the following sentence : " The exacerbation of racial antagonism showed itself in violent clashes between rival groups, and this recrudescence of local strife gave the allied Military Government an opportunity of reasserting its authority." Can a person not used to dictionaries be expected to look up the missing links in the chain of his understanding ? Hardly, he simply turns away and finds solace in the arms of Jane or the familiar language of the *Mail*. The fact that " sesquipedal slogans blemish roofs, walls and roadways " leaves him cold, for he does not understand, let alone care for, a " sesquipedalian " style of writing.

It would be unfair to blame the popular press for going to the other extreme for, after all, they are merely adapting themselves to a national condition, and it is only natural and expedient that a journalist who works for such a paper should carefully watch his vocabulary and avoid difficult words, or weed them out subsequently. Editors very often have to point this out to less experienced writers, who are catering for the unlettered masses. The newspapers can hardly be held responsible for our inadequate teaching of the native tongue. Sometimes the adaptation of the journalist to the needs of his readers is, perhaps, just as well, for

very often the average reporter would find himself at loggerheads with the niceties of this most difficult idiom called English.

There is yet another danger that confronts the reader of this more ephemeral body of literature: the inferior journalist sometimes tries to mystify his public by using certain words in a peculiar way, trying to impress the reader by a lingo that seems to indicate hidden depth and expert knowledge. The good and sincere writer or critic, on the contrary, is anxious to convey his meaning as clearly as possible and scorns the practice of donning the cloak of affected superiority.

If a language is used in this manner by those who know better, it becomes an unfair weapon or acts as dope, and the person who does not know his language as well as he should becomes an easy prey, and allows himself to be persuaded by apparent superiority whereas he should only permit himself to be convinced by reasonable argument. It is quite easy for the master of words to avoid a show-down by using a string of meaningless but difficult words, which nobody cares to debunk for fear of appearing ignorant. Words thus become, as Kipling said in a speech given in 1923, "the most powerful drug used by mankind." The immortal author of *The Jungle Book* should have said more correctly: "Words are, of course, the most powerful drug used *on* mankind."

The English language, for reasons explained in previous chapters, is naturally the most ideal medium to camouflage any weakness of a speaker, if he happens to address a less educated crowd. Moreover, if he has the pronunciation of an educated man, the average person will draw the conclusion, though he actually merely assumes, that the speaker on the political platform, whom he does not know otherwise, is indeed a well educated person. The man may be a fool, but if he uses words his audience does not understand, they have no means of finding him out, and the electors may thus take his superiority and therefore suitability for granted, and perhaps prefer him to a candidate who talks sense in plain English but in uncultured accents.

The language bar, which acts as a barricade in the realm of literary and scientific expression, is also very prominent in the realm of spoken English, and if it is reinforced by the described vocabulary difficulties, the bar becomes almost unsurmountable and expands into a veritable Great Wall of China.

It is obvious that we cannot begin to be citizens in a Democracy if we are only partly capable of understanding our own language, if we cannot distinguish critically between truth and falsehood, between sense and nonsense, if we do not realize that language and the word are still more powerful than the atom bomb ; that, like a weapon, it can be used for or against us.

We modern men, who believe in science and worship machines, are we really so far removed from the age of primitive man, who was dominated by the magician, because the medicine-man was able to pronounce strange words in a strange way, because he knew incantations whose esoteric meaning was familiar to the initiated only, because he was able to draw weird and ingenious signs and letters which revealed meaning to other magicians ?

How can we feel safe in this age of propaganda and advertising, where suggestion and unintelligibleness are the great driving force, unless we fully understand our language ?

It seems that the Tower of Babel is still with us, for some of its " building material " appears to have found its way into the edifice of the English language.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE INDIVISIBILITY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

I trade both with the living and the dead languages for the enrichment of our native language.

Dryden, Æneid.

The specific and unique problem of the English language arising from its fundamentally ambilingual character has been an almost permanent source of worry to writers of English ever since the suppression of the Anglo-Saxon tongue by the Normans. Each century has brought forth guardians and champions of the English tongue who fought ceaseless, and sometimes meritorious, battles to save it from further foreign adulteration. But was it not altogether a fight against windmills, since the native tongue could not be defined with one national epithet, but had become a form of speech summed up by Daniel Defoe as "your Roman-Saxon-Danish-Norman English"?

Some writers, who seem to have regarded the foreign assets of the English language as liabilities have tried to cut the Gordian knot by advocating the extermination of the "un-native" element, demanding a pure Anglo-Saxon vocabulary. Some were moved by a genuine desire to solve a literary, if not national, problem; with others, however, it had become an *idée fixe* bordering on mere affectation and lingual puritanism. The futility of their obsession is often strangely revealed in the very wording of their appeals to fall back on their Anglo-Saxon inheritance, whereby the very choice of their words testifies to the hopelessness of their enterprise. Thus, one of those apostles of Germanic rebirth unconsciously employs quite a formidable array of "intruder-words" when he urges us "to recover its (the idiom's) primitive flexibility and plastic power, to discard the adventitious aids and ornaments borrowed from Greece and Rome, to supply the place of foreign by domestic compounds, to clothe again our thoughts and

our feelings exclusively in a garb of living, organic, native growth".¹

Again and again the Bible has been quoted as the great model of an almost perfectly Anglo-Saxon idiom and diction and as the living testimony of the feasibility of a truly English style. If this were so, Chaucer's works, for instance, would appear to be less English than the Bible. Though undoubtedly the influence of the Bible in English literature is very considerable, there is no need for uncritical and unsubstantiated statements claiming that the entire compass of English literature is to be found in it. Moreover, the words of the Bible, to a large extent, were not new creations, but were extracted from the living speech of the people and the literary works of the period, and we should not regard sweeping statements like Macaulay's that "the English Bible . . . if everything else in our language should perish, would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power" as revelation.

Purists seem to be unaware of the fact that the great translators of the Bible were not prejudiced against words of foreign parentage provided they served the purpose and were intelligible. Thus, they translated: "In the beginning God *created* the heaven and the earth. And the earth was waste (without form) and *void*." The English version agrees with the French, which says: "Au commencement Dieu *créa* les cieux et la terre. La terre était informe et *vide*." It also agrees with the Italian, which renders: "Nel principio Iddio *creò* il cielo e la terra. E la terra era una cosa deserta e *vacua*." Likewise, the Spanish reads: "En el principio *crió* Dios los cielos y la tierra. Y la tierra estaba desordenada y *vacía*." Without any difficulty the English translators of the Bible could have said: "In the beginning God *made* (*out of nothing*) the heaven and the earth. And the earth was shapeless and *empty*." Apparently they had no intention of going out of their way to employ pure Saxon or Germanic words. They could have done what Martin Luther did, or the translators of the Dutch and other Bibles. They

¹ To recover (OF. *recouver*) its primitive (F. *primitif*) flexibility (F. *flexibilité*) and plastic (Gk. *plastikos*) power (OF. *poer*, F. *pouvoir*) to discard (L. *dis*, F. *carte*) the adventitious (L. *adventicus*) aids (F. *aide*) and ornaments (OF. *ornement*) borrowed from Greece and Rome to supply (F. *supplier*) the place (F. *place*) of foreign (OF. *forain*) by domestic (L. *domesticus*) compounds (OF. *compon(d)re*) to clothe again our thoughts and our feelings exclusively (med.L. *exclusivus*) in a garb (It. *garbo*, originally Teutonic) of living, organic (L. *organicus*), native (L. *nativus*) growth.

evidently pursued other ideas and ideals in their translations and were not in the least perturbed when they used an occasional "foreigner" saying, for instance, that "God *divided* the light from the darkness", whereas Luther has: "Da *schied* Gott das Licht von der Finsterniss," and the Dutch says: "En God *maakte scheiding* tusschen het licht en tusschen de duisternis."

Purists are also fond of singling out *proverbs* to support their case for Anglo-Saxon exclusiveness. It is quite true that "Anglo-Saxon" proverbs are very numerous, which merely helps to prove that there is a language bar, without establishing, however, that such proverbs, being intrinsically English, are preferable to others which contain foreign "contaminations". The explanation for such a preference lies in the very nature of the proverb, for those "edged tools of speech", as Lord Bacon calls them, originated in the more primitive stages of literary evolution, and like the anonymous ballad belong to the domain of folklore. Mostly they are the outcome and reflection of the collective experience of several generations and are the short, pithy expression of the philosophy of the common people, which gives them a naïve, often commonplace, but nevertheless striking and colourful character. Being that, they are naturally dressed in a simple, straightforward language, and thus prefer the Anglo-Saxon costume. It is not surprising that with the establishment of the art of printing they gradually became extinct as a literary species. Sporadically they experience a revival in literary camouflage as, for instance, in the notorious case of Martin Farquhar Tupper's *Proverbial Philosophy* (1838-76), one of the most amazing and inexplicable successes in the literary history of the world, reaching a sale of more than one million copies in the U.S., and more than five thousand annually for many years in England. The most recent American edition was published in 1904.

Proverbs of "Anglo-Saxon" coinage such as: *be not a baker, if your head be of butter* appeal by their simple directness to our imagination, and can be remembered with little effort. *When you are an anvil, hold you still, when you are a hammer, strike your fill; if you do not want to go into the oven, lie athwart the door; one nail drives out another; full guts neither run well nor fight well; little knows the fat sow what the lean one means; need makes the naked queen spin; many hands make light work*, and a host of others commend themselves for the same reason.

On the other hand, there are shoals of proverbs that do not despise foreign roots, as for instance : *keep your own counsel ; honour and profit will not keep in one sack ; jest with an ass, and he will flap you in the face with his tail ; too much familiarity breeds contempt ; the devil is a busy bishop in his own diocese ; misery acquaints men with strange bed-fellows ; temperance is the best physic ; adversity flattereth no man ; no vice like avarice.*

It should be very hard to argue that " let sleeping dogs lie " is superior as a proverb, and because of its home-grown roots, to " honesty is the best policy ".

The English language, as it lives to-day, is an organic growth, and its bilingual or polylingual vocabulary has become a unique and indestructible, as well as an indivisible, body, and the removal of its " foreign elements ", if such a procedure were at all possible, would not be a minor surgical extirpation, but amount to a major operation. It would bring about the destruction of a vital limb, which would leave the body crippled if not mutilated. Such an operation, if successful, would produce an idiom of unadulterated Anglo-Saxon spirit, but the patient, the English language, would have to give up the ghost in the process.

The indivisibility of the English vocabulary can be borne out most irrefutably by an analysis of *Basic English*. C. K. Ogden, the originator of this highly interesting linguistic experiment, discovered Basic English, when he was working (with I. A. Richards) at the book *The Meaning of Meaning*. In their continual comparison of definitions of English words they found that the same words kept on cropping up. These definition-words which were essential seemed to form a nucleus-language within the language much simpler though not artificially created. The list of these essential or basic words, compiled by Ogden between the years 1920 and 1929, was the fruit of critical experimentation and scientific research. Ogden who, according to the appreciative chronology of H. G. Wells, lived from 1889-1990, had no intention of purifying the English language, and was thus quite unprejudiced as far as its native and foreign elements were concerned, merely wanted to provide a " supernational or minimum world secondary language " as well as an improved introductory course for foreign learners leading into general English.

Since C. K. Ogden's approach was an objective one, his list of

850 basic words is bound to reveal the basic composition of the English vocabulary and either prove or disprove its mixed character. If Ogden's basic list were Anglo-Saxon, English, at least basically, could be regarded as an Anglo-Saxon or purely Germanic language. The etymological analysis of the list shows the utter futility and unnaturalness of any attempt at "purifying" the English tongue, for only 352 of its 850 words are of native stock, 489 are of foreign extraction, eight of uncertain parentage (growth, rub, basket, brake, gun, monkey, pig, pump), and one (arm) of English or foreign origin, according to the meaning of the word. Even if we take into account that twenty of the imported roots are from Old Norse, that another six are of Teutonic and one of Middle-High-German origin, that is altogether twenty-seven of Germanic extraction, the non-Germanic roots still hold the field, for the ratio is 379 : 462. Thus, it is evident that English is *basically as well as generally* a mixed language. Considering that, grammatically, English is an essentially Germanic language, the equilibrium is restored, and we need not fear with John Dryden that, if "too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed not to assist the natives, but to conquer them".

To the dispassionate observer it seems fairly obvious that the vocabulary of the English language, whose very birth had been the result of a compromise, should try to maintain a happy medium, because a strong deviation from it, either towards excessive Latinization or an over-indulgence in the Germanic direction would inevitably upset its unique balance and thus impair this perhaps most European language of all.

Fortunately, developments in either direction have, as a rule, been opposed, and sometimes vigorously attacked, by such writers of all centuries as were guided by a fine sense of judgment or a deep-rooted instinct, though it must be said that once such an extreme development in either direction is allowed to strike root it may do a great deal of harm, for it may affect a whole generation of writers, before it can be effectively counteracted and finally checked. After all, the truism that bad habits are more persistent than good ones is also most true in the realm of literary style.

The most notorious instance of such a prolonged effect was produced by Dr. Johnson's "vicious partiality for terms which

long after our own speech had been fixed were borrowed from Greek and Latin ", and we are not inclined to refute this criticism made by Macaulay, when we read Johnsonese expressions like : *præmial*, *momentaneous*, *annuitant*, *obtunds*, *divaricate*, *procerity*, *operose*, *adscititious*, *papilionaceous*, *colorifick*, *figorifick*, *alexipharmick*, *equiponderant*, *intenerate*, *irremeable*, *conglobulate*, *anfractuosities*, *labefaction*, and many others. Johnson's " teeth-breaking diction ", as Horace Walpole describes it, had eaten itself so deeply into the body literary of his time that more than half a century had to pass before it was able to regenerate itself, for it was not before 1835 that Carlyle was in a position to report that at last " the whole structure of Johnsonian English " was " breaking up from the foundations ".

An intentional Latinization of the English tongue is bound to be harmful, because it tends to destroy its strongly idiomatic character. It would be :—

" An English cut on Greek and Latin,
Like fustian heretofore on satin,"

and rouse the angry spirit of a Samuel Butler to denounce it as :—

" A Babylonish dialect,
Which learned pedants much affect."

The other extreme, the outcome of Anglo-Saxomania, which is supposed to introduce a happy touch of noble simplicity, inevitably forces its advocates into the pseudo-archaic diction known as " Wardour Street English ". Writers who practise it seem to be utterly unaware of the fact that the simplest is not necessarily the most adequate expression.

Some of those worshippers of Wodan would gladly turn iconoclast, eradicate all foreign " parasites ", and recast the entire English language in the image of Anglo-Saxon. Such a reconstruction of the national language does, by no means, belong to the realm of Utopia, for several attempts were made in the nineteenth century by men like William Morris (1834-1896), Francis Newman (1805-1897), brother of Cardinal Newman and writer on languages of the Middle East, the noted English historian Edward Augustus Freeman (1823-1896), and to a minor degree by Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) and George Meredith (1828-1909). By far

the most interesting apostle of a radical "Anglosaxification" was the Dorset poet William Barnes (1806-1886), who lived with the shadows of sixty-seven languages, and had he succeeded, would have made a ghost of his mother tongue in the name of the Teutonic god Tiw. He undertook the task of purification not because he liked to play about with words; he looked upon himself as the champion of the uneducated. He fully realized that the average Englishman was an exile within the domain of his native speech, for "English in its foreign-worded fulness" was "a speech only for the more learned, and foreign to the unschooled man". Experience had taught the observant Rev. W. Barnes that much of the meat of his sermons was "undigested" by his flock, that even the Bible was "halfloss to their minds". He was aware of the seriousness of the problem, but his solution of the dilemma, or as he would have called it, "*two-horned redeship*" of the English language would have produced an even greater confusion.

According to the author of the *Poems of Rural Life* the modern journal *Horizon* would now be called *Sky-sill*, a word that would introduce an element of concreteness, impairing the poetry of its conception, narrowing down its vastness, spoiling its atmospheric effect. *Gleecraft*, for music, would have destroyed one of the genuinely international word-concepts in European civilization, and so would *fireghost* for electricity and *deemstery* for criticism. Barnes' substitutions, *onhenge*, *hearsomeness*, *fourwinkle*, for appendix, obedience, quadrangle, are modelled on Germanic expressions such as German *Anhang* (onhenge), *Gehorsam(keit)* (hearsomeness), and *Viereck* with *vier Winkel* (fourwinkle). He suggests *forstoneing* (German *Versteinerung*) for fossil, though this is actually a translation of the word petrification, and with his *folkwain* for omnibus his prophetic mind seems to have forestalled the *Volkswagen* of Hitler's Third Reich. Some of his creations, or rather word reproductions, could be quite useful, when he proposes *starlet* for the Greek *asterisk* and *yeargyld*, German "Jahrgeld", (*Jahr* year and *Geld* money) for *annuity*. These and other reformative attempts of the rector of Came were doomed to failure. In any case, the task of recasting the body of the English language in an Anglo-Saxon furnace, or as he would have called it "high-oven", which would amount to a lingual liquidation of the Roman and Norman conquests, is bound to exceed the powers of a single

person, but a determined and enthusiastic team of trained philologists could produce some startling results.

Many Germanic words could, for instance, be found in the period of Transition English. From works such as *Ancrene Riwe* (about 1225) we could salvage expressions like *unhope* and *unbelief* which were replaced by *desperaunce* as well as *unwisdom* (German *Unwissenheit*) and *unwitenisse*, which were ousted by the French word *ignorance*, whereas bigamy was simply and unambiguously rendered as *twowifing*. In Trevisa's *Polychronicon* (1387) the word-restorer would discover *steihe* for ascend, which would match its German counterpart *steigen* to mount, ascend, and *schedeth* (German *scheiden*) for depart, and *deel* (German *Teil*) for part. Trevisa's Germanic infinitive *to wyfe* was replaced in Caxton's modernization of the *Polychronicon* by the French expression *marie*, his captains were *lederes* (leaders), and his prayers were *bedes* (modern German (*Ge*)bete); a commandment was a *heste*, a form still preserved in *behest*.

Other sources would yield *fore-elders* for ancestors, *fair-hood* for beauty, *fore-wit* (German *Vorwitz* in the old sense) for caution, *book-hoard* for library, *wanhope* for despair, *rimecraft* for arithmetic, *gold-hoard* for treasure, *earth-tilth* for agriculture, *wonstead* (German *Wohnstätte*, from *wohnen* dwell, and *Stätte* place) for residence, *starcraft* for astronomy, *almsful* for charitable, and many more. 'Tis pity that some of the fanatical and extremist word-puritans fail to study historically the evolution of their own tongue. This pursuit would expose their folly to themselves, and temper their purificatory fervour, since they would realize that some of their precursors had suggested the excommunication of words which they had come to look upon as properly English. Most probably they would dismiss as highly exaggerated Alexander Gill's (1565-1635) outburst in his work *Logonomia Anglica* (published in 1619), when he says: "O harsh lips, I now hear all around me such words as *common*, *vices*, *envy*, *malice*; even *virtue*, *study*, *justice*, *pity*, *merry*, *compassion*, *profit*, *commodity*, *colour*, *grace*, *favour*, *acceptance*. But whither, I pray, in all the world have been banished those words which our forefathers used for these new-fangled ones? Are our words to be exiled like our citizens? Is the new barbaric invasion to extirpate the English tongue? O ye Englishmen, on you, I say, I call, in whose veins

that blood flows, retain, retain, what remains of our native speech, and whatever vestiges of our forefathers are yet to be seen, on these plant your footsteps." They would hesitate to agree with Gill, who was Richard Mulcaster's successor at St. Paul's School and numbered John Milton among his pupils, that the introduction of words like *common*, *vice*, *mercy*, etc., was comparable to the outbreak of a "mange" upon the fair body of the English language, and it might have dawned upon them that the expulsions proposed by them in their time might appear equally ridiculous to their purist colleagues a hundred and fifty years later. They would realize that the glory of the English language is not heightened by calling citizens *burghers*, cyclists *wheelmen*, or, according to Barnes, globules *ballkins*, auctions *bode-sales*, botany *wort-lore*, and degrees of comparison *itches of suchness*.

It is interesting to observe the continuous struggle between writers who wish to advance with the natural trends of development in their language and those who are trying to put the clock back, who would gladly reverse the order of time and, let us say, retranslate William Caxton's fifteenth-century English into the fourteenth-century speech of John Trevisa, turning *I* into *ich*, *doctryne* into *lore*, *called* into *i-cleped*, *fade* into *welketh*, *disposed* into *i-cast*, *tents* into *teeldis*, *markettis* into *chepinge*, and *egges* into *eyren*. Maybe Caxton was right when he attributed the changes in the English language to the influence of the moon, for according to him, "we Englysshemen ben borne ynder the domynacyon of the mone which is never stedfaste, but ever waveringe, wexynge one season, and waneth and dycreaseth another season."

In his great efforts to write for and help the man in the street, Reginald Pecock (1395?-1460?), Bishop of Chichester, became one of the most courageous pioneers of the English language. In order to be understood by the common people he avoided Latin and Greek terms and replaced them by Germanic ones, substituting, to quote a few instances, *unovercomeable* for invincible, *weepable* for deplorable, *wones* for customs, *bewamble* for vomit, *deme* for judge, *lewdness* for ignorance, *sikirly* for certainly, *unhangingly* for unconnected, *overer* for superior, and *ungainsayable* for incontrovertible. All these words could be used by modern purists. Wyclif would yield *forlooker* for provider, and a twelfth-century translator of St. Mark's Gospel has *forlier* (Anglo-Saxon *forligere*) for adulterer.

Shakespeare's contemporary, Sylvester, would supply the language surgeons with *un-old* for rejuvenate, and many other relics. Several hundreds of words could thus be extracted from the tombs of time and resuscitated.

In addition to these museum pieces a good many words are still alive in various parts of the country, though they have lost their place in the ever moving, ever changing current of the English language, and they would be very useful substitutes for words of foreign extraction. There is *lift* (German *Luft*) for air and atmosphere, used by Burns and in the north of England; and *kittle* in the proverbial saying, "it's *kittle* to waken sleeping dogs," as well as in the phrase, "a *kittle* question" (German: eine *kitzlige* Frage), a word which is now replaced by dangerous and difficult. *Inwit*, for instance, occurs in *Piers Plouwman* (fourteenth century) and in James Joyce as a more telling expression for that inner knowledge we connect with conscience, in German: *Gewissen*. There is *hindersome* for retarding, preventing; and *halfendele* or *halfendeal* for moiety; *groundwall* for foundation; *guest-meal* (German: *Gastmahl*) for dinner-party; *gainbite* (German: *Gewissensbisse*) for remorse; *fremd*, *fremit* (German: *fremd*) for strange, unacquainted; *forefighter* (German: *Vorkämpfer*) for champion; *evenhood* for equality; *unheartsome* for melancholy; *unhearty* for timid, listless, and many more.

Others would have to be reconstructed or partly created, a game vastly superior in fascination to crossword puzzles and by no means unknown in the ranks of linguists and grammarians. Modern Swedish, Danish, German, and Dutch words could be used as models, Anglo-Saxon and Middle English words providing the building material.

Thus, to illustrate the procedure Anglo-Saxon *stæcraft*, Middle English *stefcraft*, would emerge as *staffcraft* for grammar. Based on Anglo-Saxon *ræd* (Danish: *Raad*, German: *Rat*) and *Rædgifa*, the words counsel and councillor could be replaced by *rede* and *rede-giver*. Alan Ramsay, as a matter of fact, has the phrase "short rede is good rede", and Ophelia tells Laertes to reckon "his own rede". To *hele* (Danish: *hæle*, German: *hehlen*) would be a thoroughly Germanized word for conceal. Middle English terms like *forthgang* (Danish: *Fremgang*), *ingang* (Danish: *Indgang*, German: *Eingang*), *outgang* (Danish: *Udgang*, German:

Ausgang), and *misgang* could be adopted without transformation and replace the Mediterranean products : progress, entrance, exit, and trespass. If *forthcallen* was good enough to mean *provoke* for the maker of Psalm 77 in the Anglo-Saxon and Early English Psalter, *forthcall* would be good enough for us. The Danish word *forrade* and German *verraten* could provide models for a modern English *forrade* strongly supported by its Anglo-Saxon and Middle-English fore-runners *forrædan* and *forræden*, as well as by the authority of the great Walter Mapes, Layamon, and the Bible, and we could cross off our present words deceive, betray, seduce. Our legal rights could be safely entrusted to a *forespeaker*, and likewise the fate of the English language could be competently taken care of by the *shapingers* or creators of a truly simple and purely Germanic diction. Shakespeare, Milton, and even Spenser would, of course, be condemned to perpetual imprisonment in the nethermost vaults of the British Museum, occasionally visited by an adept in the extinct English language now superseded by Modern Anglo-Saxon.

Such gloomy visions, however, need not disturb our literary peace, for history and the evolution of the English language have already decided the issue, and we find the answer in the annals of English literature. A close study of great masters of English prose, such as Swift, Sterne, Edmund Burke, Milton, Defoe, Shelley, to name only a few, reveals that they are not prejudiced in their choice of words. Their main concern or "predominating passion", to speak with Coleridge, is the finding of the artistically as well as intellectually appropriate word conveying their idea and its associative pattern to the highest degree. An author who rejects a word merely because it is either of foreign derivation or of Anglo-Saxon stock, even if it is the most adequate expression of his idea, does not deserve to draw upon the riches of a most generous language.

Indeed, English is so generous a language that an author, if he wished, could express himself in two "different" languages without leaving the territory of his mother tongue. In what European language, for instance, could one do what was done by one of the most profound linguists, James Joyce, when he occasionally segregated the Germanic and the Romance elements and isolated them, in order to produce two entirely different effects, both of them

English, and thus laid bare the dual roots of the English language.

Listen to the simple, homely sounds of the first passage, its friendly melody, its emotional warmth, the drowsiness conveyed by words which demand no intellectual effort, the infantine-senescent mood of man and nature :

“ And from the door of Dignam’s house a boy ran out and called. Twittering the bat flew here, flew there. Far out over the sands the coming surf crept, gray. Howth settled for slumber, tired of long days, of yuyum rhododendrons (he was old) and felt gladly the night breeze lift, ruffle his fell of ferns. He lay but opened a red eye unsleeping, deep and slowly breathing, slumberous but awake. And far on Kish bank the anchored lightship twinkled, winked, at Mr. Bloom.”

And now a Græco-Roman contrast, meant to produce a nocturnal atmosphere, a mood which, however, is being analysed, dissected by the brain. This passage cannot be mentally digested in a state of somnolence, but commands the attention of a wakeful, clearly analytical intellect :

“ What play of forces, including inertia, rendered departure undesirable? The lateness of the hour, rendering procrastinatory : the obscurity of the night, rendering invisible : the uncertainty of Thorougfares, rendering perilous : the necessity for repose, obviating movement : the proximity of an occupied bed, obviating research : the anticipation of warmth tempered with coolness, obviating desire and rendering desirable : the statue of Narcissus, sound without echo, desired desire.”

If one reads the first passage from *Ulysses* and compares it with the second, the duality of James Joyce’s personality becomes an established fact : two different writers and stylists seem to be speaking, both of them masters and neither of them supreme. One wonders whether Joyce ever thanked his maker that he was allowed to be born into the English language, the most dangerous and the most ideally congenial medium for the expression of his divided soul. What ever one may think of the literary value of his genius, nobody will dispute the fact that he made even more than the fullest use of his mother tongue, that he demonstrated the ultimate indivisibility of the English language, though he succeeded temporarily in dividing it.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE REMOVAL OF THE LANGUAGE BAR

The ancient languages are the scabbard which holds the mind's sword.

Goethe, Table Talks, 1814.

*Small skill in Latin, and still less in Greek,
Is more than adequate, to all I seek.*

Cowper, Tirocinium.

A "purification" of the English language, if it could be achieved, would only be partially successful, because most of the doublets which increase our wealth of synonyms would have to be sacrificed. The result would be a considerable simplification, but on the other hand would lead to serious impoverishment of the language. Shakespeare, for instance, would be reduced to greater simplicity, and the average person would be able to read his works with little difficulty, but his gain would be vitiated by a much greater loss. He would find himself in the position of the German reader who thinks he receives Shakespeare fully, whereas he merely perceives a reflection of his glory.

It is true, simplification is sometimes necessary and salutary, particularly when it cuts avenues into parasitic growth of over-elaborate and abtruse detail which hides and stifles healthy vegetation; it is true, simplification saves time in a civilization which we allow to grow more and more complicated every day, but on the other hand, we must not permit ourselves to be carried too far, forgetting that by saving time we do not necessarily gain in other respects. All natural growth is fascinating and satisfying in its bewildering manifoldness, and even weeds are interesting and often beautiful, whilst a standardization of nature, if such a condition could be achieved, would most probably destroy its mystery. We may simplify life in a factory, we may simplify the procedure of parliament, but not the life of human beings.

After all, we purposely increase the variety of our flowers and

plants and breed new kinds of animals in competition with Nature, and the harassed naturalists who have to sort them out in order to classify them do not seem to mind, but on the contrary, are delighted. Similarly, we continue to create new words to give expression to our steadily increasing consciousness. We cultivate our language as naturally as we cultivate our gardens, keeping down the weeds not to interfere with nature, but to help and support life in the creation of beauty, and just as a gardener does not violate nature but supports and enhances it, we should take great care not to violate our language or force it into a strait-jacket, because it seems to have grown too luxuriantly.

Planning and the introduction of simple patterns are permissible and expedient in the case of artificial, international languages like Esperanto, Ido, Novial, Interlingua, Occidental, Pasilingua, Latinesce, or Volapük, which, for this very reason, strike us as unnatural and somewhat dead. They are full of brain but devoid of blood, they are all rules and no exceptions, and that is as should be, since the artificial world language fundamentally fulfils a utilitarian purpose. Such languages, however, in all fairness, should not be compared with organically developed tongues like English or Chinese. The constructed and thought-out character of such specially created auxiliary languages—there are over two hundred of them—is perhaps the reason why people who refuse to accept them but realize the importance and necessity of a universal language are so strongly attracted by Basic English or Basic Chinese, because they are natural though greatly restricted languages. They are like gardens in the French style, clipped and pruned, visually very much the product of garden shears, but nevertheless gardens.

A great deal of the fascination of such unusually complex languages as English, or Chinese to a certain extent, is conditioned by their outstanding difficulties. Maybe our highly mechanized world would best be served by the abolition of all extant languages and the introduction of a mechanized form of speech, though this would mean the beginning of the end of all real civilization, the anti-thesis of the Tower of Babel, only perhaps more disastrous. This, however, will never come to pass, for the heritage of great literature will always prevent the taking of such a step.

Since the simplification of the English language is a cultural

impossibility, there seems to be only one way out of our dilemma, to have recourse to the solution of the Renaissance : a classical education. Latin and Greek would not only become instruments for the teaching of English, they would also serve as a means for the full understanding of the mother tongue, for as an eminent educationist once put it : " classical training in Latin and Greek is an implement of education with which we can very little afford to dispense," and he added, " the greatness of our literature and poetry rests largely on the fidelity of the English people " to such a training.

This makes strange reading in an age of democracy which endeavours to extend the benefit of a *full* education to every member of the nation, for the " English people " who are supposed to remain faithful to the tradition of a classical education are only a very small section of the nation. If we adopt the principle of a " generous education ", to borrow Milton's words, we should have to expand our range of classical education and make it nationwide. Milton's generosity did, however, not go as far as all that, because his " complete and generous education " was intended for an *élite* and was meant to equip " a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously all the offices both private and public of peace and war ".

This argument immediately raises the controversy of " modern education versus classical education ", which in our case boils down to the more palpable question whether a general classical training would be altogether feasible. The time factor alone would decide against such a scheme, for not even the richest nation could afford to devote millions of working hours to the acquisition of a knowledge of Latin and Greek. If we assumed with John Milton that we need not spend " seven or eight years merely in scraping together so much miserable Latin and Greek as might be learned otherwise easily and delightfully in one year ", the plan might be practicable, but alas, Milton's time economy is based on the gratuitous yet unwarranted assumption that the average Britisher is equipped with a Miltonic brain.

Even the less radical short cut proposed by Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) would demand four or five years of dedication to Latin and Greek, an abbreviation that could only be achieved through the expedient of private tuition, for Gibbon who " was

left to acquire the beauties of the Latin, and the rudiments of the Greek tongues " in his " riper age " estimated that " the necessity of leading in equal ranks so many unequal powers of capacity and application will prolong to eight or ten years the juvenile studies, which might be dispatched in half that time by the skilful master of a single pupil ". Moreover, the author of the *Decline and Fall* was well aware of the fact that a classical education would not answer the needs of the man in the street, for the grammar schools of his period, so he says, " do not exactly correspond with the precept of a Spartan king, ' that the child should be instructed in the arts which will be useful to the man.' " Gibbon knew the difficulties of the classical idiom only too well, because he himself had " purchased the knowledge of Latin syntax at the expense of many tears and some blood ". It is clear that neither the Miltonic nor the Gibbonian recipe for acquisition of a classical education are applicable to the average child.

In case we accept the statement of another authority that it is " scarcely possible to speak the English language with accuracy and precision without a knowledge of Latin and Greek ", we must, so it seems, resign ourselves to the fact that the vast majority of the English-speaking peoples shall be condemned for ever to use their mother tongue inaccurately and express themselves in a manner which, on the whole, is more slovenly, more slipshod, and less sensitive than that of any other European nation. S. C. Woodhouse's very useful book *The Englishman's Pocket Latin-English and English-Latin Dictionary*, for instance, points in the same direction. It implies the inter-dependence of the English and Latin tongues, and was written with the express purpose " to serve not merely the classical scholar, but the wider public which has little or *no* familiarity with the dead languages ". It is clear that Woodhouse considered his work to be an essential tool in the hands, or rather pocket, of the English reader who desires to understand his own national literature, both scientific and literary. Once more, we realize the unique ambivalent position of English in the family of the languages of Europe, for a similarly composed dictionary for the Scandinavian languages or German, would be as superfluous and irrelevant as it would be for Frenchmen, Spaniards, or Italians to acquaint themselves with Anglo-Saxon, Old Norse, or Old High German in order to understand and appreciate French, Spanish,

or Italian literature. The English-speaking person, however, cannot walk in "the poetic fields" of his literature and enjoy its "shining prospects" without the help of Greek and Roman props, without the elevation of the ancient buskin.

Fortunately, however, it is not necessary to learn Latin and Greek to become proficient in English for, after all, the English language does not incorporate them, and in character and structure is different from either of them. Thus, the English student who learns to master the speech of Virgil and Homer is learning considerably more than is needed towards a full appreciation of his native tongue. What has become part and parcel of the English language is on the whole merely a large number of Latin and Greek words. Therefore, the problem is fundamentally one of *vocabulary*, that is to say, limited in range to word knowledge. The main difficulty for the English student of Latin and Greek lies in their grammar and syntax, a difficulty which is so considerably greater for an English scholar, because the grammar of his own idiom does not possess anything like the complications and intricacies of classical speech. In this respect, the French, German, or Russian student enjoys the advantage of a preparatory training through the medium of the complicated grammar of his own native tongue.

From the point of view of a largely grammarless language it is, of course, doubly useful to train one's mind in a more formative and definitely prescribed cast of speech such as Latin and Greek, but this is by no means a paramount condition for the appreciation of one's native tongue. Chinese, for instance, has preserved only the mere rudiments of something that hardly deserves the name of grammar, and yet it would be ludicrous to say that a Chinese cannot fully understand his own language unless he has studied a highly grammatical tongue like Greek, Russian, or Hebrew. An English person, desirous of the mental experience provided by such a language, could with far more ease study Spanish, German, Hungarian, or he could take up his own ancestral language, Anglo-Saxon, in which he would find more grammar than he has bargained for, more grammatical differentiation, for instance, than in modern German.

An analysis of the mental work needed to acquire a good knowledge of Latin or Greek would reveal that at least four-fifths of the

required energy and intellectual effort would have to be expended on the learning and constant repetition of cases, declensions, conjugations, the subtleties of syntax, the mysteries of versification, and the hazards of interpretation. The compilation of words, in itself more interesting to the average person than grammar, should prove a comparatively easy and less arduous task and could be accomplished in a reasonably short time. The difference between an unlettered Englishman and his well educated compatriot does not lie so much in the fact that the former knows one or two additional languages, but in the circumstance of his knowledge of, or familiarity with, Latin and Greek roots, making him feel intellectually and spiritually at home in the *entire* range of his language, whereas the linguistically untutored mind is at sea in an ocean of unintelligible words which he tends to corrupt and misuse, as if he were a stranger to his own tongue.

It would be utterly wrong to think that an uneducated person does not care whether he knows the root meaning of the words he uses so long as he knows their accepted meaning and gets what he asked for. If this were true, people would not corrupt words in a way that makes them sound familiar, and gives them a natural significance. The *Cœur Doré* (Golden Heart) as a public-house sign makes sense in the corrupt pronunciation *The Queer Door*, wrong sense, but sense just the same. The fact that there is no local evidence of a queer door is, in this connection, of no importance ; besides, the *Queer Door* is a much more colourful name for a public house than the *Golden Heart*. Moreover, if understanding and sense were not sought after, the ignorant would merely corrupt the " meaningless " word, and leave it at that. It is true that such distortions of words do also happen but, on the whole, corruptions try to make sense where there is, or rather seems to be, none, according to the judgment of the unlearned speaker. *Summer*, for instance, meaning a large beam or stone serving as a lintel or base of an arch, does not make sense, because it is the corruption of the Greek word *sagma* (σαγμα, originally " packsaddle "), but it sounds familiar and homely. Besides, it is easier to use a known word in a different sense than to memorize a strange word that evokes no associations. *Somersault* sounds English, and is therefore preferable to the etymologically correct Middle French *soubresault*, from Latin *supra* over and *saltus* leap, from *salire* to leap. The

spelling *summersault* looks better, and I dare say "*summersalt*" would be still more satisfactory and reassuring to the eye.

Most people, for instance, will reason in the following manner : I know what kidneys are, and therefore I know the meaning of the cliché *he is a man of my kidney*, a most gratuitous assumption, for kidney in this particular context means affections, since in former days the kidneys were believed to be the seat of our affections. *A man of my kidney* therefore semantically reads : a person who shares my likes and dislikes, feels, and reacts as I do.

The majority of "folk-etymologies" were made in this process of sense-making. The expression *grass-widow*, for instance, is generally accepted and causes no further inquiry, because its superficial meaning is generally understood. Its two components, *grass* and *widow*, are clear enough to everybody, and the average person is quite content with the superficial sound-meaning, without troubling about a definition. Hence, the success of the Socratic method, even in the twentieth century. It would be most instructive to find out by Gallup poll how many people know, for instance, the meaning of the words of a generally known though not so frequently used phrase such as *to kick the bucket*. How many people know the origin of the phrase and therefore its proper meaning, how many don't know that they don't know it, and how many know that they don't know it but never bothered to find the answer. Practically every English-speaking person is familiar with the saying, and yet very few know that *bucket* in this connection means *beam*, the beam on which pigs are hung by their hind legs for the purpose of killing. In their death struggle their legs kick the bucket (i.e. beam). The undisguised meaning of the words therefore is : *to die like a pig*. But how many, indeed, ever raise the question of meaning ? If the phrase should go *he kicked the custard* people would begin to ask questions. *Bucket* is such an obvious word, and so is *grass-widow*. Moreover both expressions sound funny.

Grass-widow is a corruption of *grace-widow*, from the French *veuve de grâce*, based on Latin *viduca de gratia*, but *grace* is an abstract and *grass* a concrete word, and since the French pronunciation of *grâce* and that of the English word *grass* were identical the change-over was effected without difficulty. The original form *grace-widow* indicated that the denomination "widow" was conferred upon the lady as an act of grace or courtesy

to hide the fact that the husband had not departed or gone away in the usual metaphorical manner, but had deserted or divorced his "widow". *De facto* she was a woman who had "lost" her husband and therefore had become a "widow". Subsequently, the meaning was narrowed down to a short or temporary separation of husband and wife.

The names of inns—as we have seen in the case of the *Cœur Doré*—are particularly revealing in this respect. They maintain the sound-pattern, corrupting the word into a new meaning because the old one is either lost or no longer understood. Is it surprising that people who refuse to admit their ignorance of the meaning of the word *Bacchanals* should strip it of its mythological sumptuousness and turn it into a much more tangible *Bag o' Nails*? The originally Dutch name of the public house *Goed in der Gouden Boots* (i.e. the god Mercury in his golden sandals) could not survive as it failed to make sound-sense. A slight transformation into a *Goat in Golden Boots* solved the problem neatly. A similar fate befell the name of the public house *Hirondelle* (French for *swallow*) when the swift bird was transformed by popular magic, probably under the inspiring influence of so many pints and assisted by the local pronunciation of the French bird as "iron dell" into an *Iron Devil*. Maybe in their anxiety to share the hospitable roof of the publican in winter as well as summer they shared the Roman superstition expressed in the Latin proverb *Hirundinem sub eodem tecto ne habeas*. The poetical *Rose des Quatre Saisons*, too, became a victim of sense-making corruption; it was duly naturalized and sentenced to be *The Rose of the Quarter Sessions* for life.

Children, too, are past-masters of word corruption, which shows incidentally that they are greatly interested in the meaning and structure of words. Their lingual curiosity, as a rule, is greater than that of their elders. Their perceptions are not yet blunted by habit. The other day I overheard a conversation between a mother and her little daughter, who had just managed to decipher the inscription *London Transport* on a Watford train. "What is transport, mum?" asked the child. Instead of admitting her ignorance—mother neither looked nor sounded as though she had enjoyed the benefit of a good education—she began to think. She had always taken the word for granted, but now, for the first time, because of her child's question she realized consciously that

it had two roots. "Oh," she said, "it's *train-sport*, of course." Both parties of the little brains-trust were satisfied with this sensible explanation, and I dare say the London Board of Transport should be highly gratified, too, and add the sport of trains to that of kings. This incident clearly shows three important things: the desire of the child to understand the root-meaning of words, the mother's acceptance of the child's question as a reasonable one. (She could have said, as parents often do, rather irritably, "transport, well, transport is . . . transport," and left it at that.) Thirdly, the quickness with which she made up with a considerable display of mother's wit, and helped by her pronunciation of *trans* as *trains*, a popular etymology which was wrong but made sense.

Such word corruptions and folk-etymologies occur more often than we would think, because they very rarely reach the printing press. They demonstrate the wish of the people to grasp their own language in its associative pattern, which so often eludes them.

The desire to understand the words in general usage is one of the most vital and hopeful trends in the development of the human race. Even to-day, in the twentieth century, it is only faintly effective, and it needs and deserves every encouragement. Too many things in our lives are taken for granted, above all words. They are cheaper than money, and very often we only know their face value, and sometimes not even that. And yet they are the currency of life. People must be made aware of their intrinsic value, or we go on spending and taking in the vaguest manner, bringing about our own cultural impoverishment in the process.

The acquisition and the widening of our word knowledge should, however, not merely be a question of learning a number of native words and of an additional multitude of Latin and Greek vocables, because words, if they are nothing but sound-patterns, or visual impressions are not properly anchored in our mind, and we are not unlike the musician who plays the notes of a sonata but fails to convey its music; he has acquired the skill to read the composition but does not understand what he is reading. We must develop a feeling for the roots of the words we are using and we must be conscious of their meaning apart from their definition, so that they become our unconscious possession without losing any of their meaning. Once they are unconsciously or subconsciously

familiar, they are, indeed, our property. To a German, for instance, the word *begreifen* (perceive) has, at all events, an unconscious significance, for though it does not necessarily make him *think* of *greifen* (grasp), of getting to know a thing by touching it with his fingers, by getting the "feel" of it, the general idea of such a process is ever present in his mind. The word *perceive*, however, has not that direct or suggestive significance for the average speaker of English. The importance and power of the unconscious basis of language may offer an explanation of the often observed phenomenon that the mother tongue, when it is replaced by a language learnt later in life, though submerged and consciously estranged will always remain potent. With the approach of old age and its diminishing conscious control of our mental processes, the "mother tongue" seems to come into its own again, and persons who had not used their original language for thirty years or more almost automatically revert to the speech of their childhood.

This interesting phenomenon manifested itself also in the life of that great master of the English language, Joseph Conrad (1857-1924), the Pole, Teodor Josef Konrad Korzeniowski, who wrote like an Englishman but spoke like a foreigner, for as his age increased he was drawn back more and more to the language of his boyhood and youth, when English had not yet begun to upset and reshape his Slav consciousness.

Taking into account the organic nature of language, its deep and hidden mainsprings, a mere translation and etymological explanation of Latin and Greek roots would not be adequate. As the child's approach to the world of words is less intellectual than that of the adult it is necessary that its contact with that world should be closely connected with the senses. Emotional associations must be firmly established, and the imagination of the child must be called into play, in other words, the approach must be imaginatively stimulating and lively, not merely intellectual and philological.

Since the field to be covered is a very large one, it will be necessary to pursue a definite plan, to arrange the subject-matter systematically, and to make a beginning in the early stages of education. It is expedient that this early start should be made with concrete words which are easily grasped even by small children. *Mouse*, for instance, would be such a suitable word, because it is

simple and appeals to the child on account of its manifold associations with the little rodent. The success of Walt Disney's hero, Micky Mouse, is sufficient proof of the universal appeal of this small creature, which releases so much fear and sympathy. It is easy to show that the Greek *μῦς* (*mys*), the Roman *mus*, and the Anglo-Saxon *mus* are the same word for the same "wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie" even in its modern pronunciation, mouse. It is, however, far less obvious that the Latin word *mus* appears in the English word *muscle*, which is an abbreviated form of Latin *musculus*. As *mus* became *mouse*, *muscle* should have become *mousle* or *mouslet*; but it didn't, because the Roman mouse was not noticed in the muscle. Since muscle corresponds to *musculus* (literally "little mouse"), the two suffixes *-cle* and *-culus* must be the same, indicating smallness.

Now the important thing is not that the child acquires the knowledge that *musculus* and *muscle* are connected with *mus* but learns to understand that there is life in words and in the process of their creation, realizing that the syllable *-cle* is not dead matter or a decorative appurtenance attached to the body of a word. "Little mouse" became a muscle or rather the muscle was given its particular name because it produced in the onlooker the association of the characteristic shape of a mouse. It is quite possible that the christening was done by a child, a little girl, perhaps watching her father while he was washing his arms. She would notice his powerful biceps and, thrilled by its movements, would ask all sorts of questions. Father, in his masculine pride, would willingly give a display of his strength. In the end they would agree that there must be a little mouse inside his arm trying to get out. That is perhaps the Just-so Story of the mouse that became partly human, explaining how a particular part of the human anatomy came to be called *musculus* or *little mouse*. The average child will have little difficulty in understanding such an interplay of word and thing, and once this realization has sunk in, and similar examples have confirmed it, words become alive and language ceases to be a vocabulary of denominations in a connective tissue of grammatical relations.

In the course of instruction the meaning of *-culus*, English *-cle*, will be kept alive and supported by words of similar construction such as *article*, from the Latin diminutive *articulus* meaning a little

joint, and there is *tabernacle* from Latin *tabernaculum* a tent, from *taberna* a hut. This word is bound to appear in religious instruction in the shape of the tent used as a sanctuary by the Israelites in their wanderings. The Mormons were apparently not aware of the fact that *tabernaculum* is a double diminutive and therefore apt to describe a diminutive structure, when they built their *Tabernacle* at Salt Lake City capable of seating over eight thousand people. The *corpuscle*, from Latin *corpusculum*, a double diminutive of *corpus*, once more confirms the *-cle*, *-culum* idea, and endows the corpuscle with the life of a "little body".

The same diminutive feeling should be developed for a group of words ending in *-cule* and *-ule*, such as *molecule* (from Latin *moles* mass) a tiny particle that cannot be reduced to atoms except by chemical change. Now the word *animalcule* is no longer a mystery to the young scholar but becomes a tiny animal (from *animalculum*), whose Latin ending gives it a scientific character and turns it into an expression fit to convey the microscopic size of an animal, for an *animalcule* is so minute that it is no longer visible to the naked eye. Similarly *reticule* would suggest Latin *reticulum*, a small *rete* or net. Once we know that a *reticule* is a little bag of network used as a lady's working-bag the word *reticulate* loses its foreign character, as well as its aspect of "difficulty", and we begin to employ it without fear or favour whenever we wish to describe net-like patterns or markings, in short, *reticulations*. Furthermore, the *retina* of the eyeball is no longer an empty term but creates in the mind's eye the picture of the net-like or *reticulate* layer in which the optic nerve terminates. Should we later on, in the pursuit of our literary excursions, enter the *Castle of Indolence* and find the lines :

As in thronged amphitheatre of old,
The wary Retiarius trapped his foe,

we know at once that Thomson visualized a gladiator who cast a net over his opponent.

There is, of course, no need to be aware of the etymology of words when we are speaking or reading, in fact such an awareness would be likely to exert a most disturbing influence upon our mental processes and prevent concentration upon the meaning of the sentence we are trying to utter. But a deeper understanding

of the words we are using should be there as an undertone and, above all, words should cease to be Latin or Greek strangers and become vehicles of meaning, and fraught with meaning for ourselves. Words like *muscle*, *article*, *tabernacle*, *corpuscle*, *molecule*, *animalcule*, and *reticule* should, apart from their separate meaning produce the common idea of smallness, and in the end there should be no need for translation into "little mouse", etc., for need of translation implies lack of understanding or of familiarity.

The mere fact that a child or adult is trying to go beneath the surface to investigate the roots and the foundation of words is in itself of value, because it means inquiry, investigation, research. We shall find that most children are quite content with the word *butter*, for instance, since it is the name of a thing they know, but even a child might ask why butter is called butter and not, let us say, *rettub*. I suppose, for people who do not care why butter is called so, *rettub* would taste just as well. The fact, however, that there is a reason why that particular word was chosen is satisfying because reason is light in the darkness.

The English word *butter*, unlike the Swedish term *smör* (our *smear*, suggestive of *spread*) yields no information because the product in question was an imported article, and with it its name was received by our ancestors from the Romans, who in turn had it from the Greeks. The Greek word βούτυρον (*boutyron*) makes sense in the same way in which overcoat or lampshade make sense, for βούς (*bous*) means ox, cattle, and τυρόν (*tyron*) cream, cheese. The Anglo-Saxons preserved the three syllables of the Latin form *butyrum* in *butera*, which later on was reduced to *buter*. The Greeks had learnt the practice of churning milk from the Scythians, passed it on to the Romans, who in turn "exported" it to the Germanic tribes who, incidentally, also applied the stuff externally for want of brilliantine.

In addition to being concrete terms, the words to be discussed and analysed in the elementary stages of teaching English should be also simple like our two examples: mouse and butter. In due course more complex and compound words can be introduced for semantic analysis. In connection with a recapitulation of the word *butter* the mystifying term *butterfly* might be moved into the focus of the child's word consciousness. At the same time, this word may serve as a further illustration of the carelessness with which we

apply words, and how unthinkingly we accept them, merely because we are familiar with their nominal meaning.

We hardly connect a butterfly with butter, and yet we take the word for granted as if we were Danes or Swedes, whose words for butterfly *are* self-explanatory, being *Sommerfugl* and *somarfogel* respectively. The literal translation of the two words "summer-bird" is not only self-evident but also poetical, whereas the English word is neither the one nor the other. Butterfly is an oddly materialistic term for such beautiful, delicate, and frail creatures, for in our mind's eye they are the very opposite of crude matter. Expressions like "blossom-wings" or "flower-brides" would be much more appropriate. We cannot even blame the Greeks for the clumsy expression butterfly, because they did not make use of the word βούτυρον (*boutyron*) in this connection, but of the intangible, ethereal ψυχή (*psyche*) meaning soul, life, and originally, breath. The meaning of breath is easily associated with that of life for, after all, to the naïve observer in the past, breath seemed to be the basic requirement and characteristic expression of the phenomenon of life.

Strange stories and legends are told in many countries about a mysterious butterfly that comes out of the mouth of a sleeper and flies away. In case it fails to return into the body of the sleeper he has begun his last sleep on earth, for his ψυχή (*psyche*), his breath-soul-life has left him. The Greek meaning of the word seems to capture most adequately the poetic essence of the butterfly. In Greek mythology it is the symbol of *Psyche*, the beloved of *Eros*, who is often described and represented as a young girl graced with the wings of a butterfly. But how did the word butterfly arise? Maybe it is just as interesting as *psyche*. We find the answer in traditional European stories telling us of witches who assumed the shape of butterflies and in that disguise drank the milk of cows and goats. In some languages the word for butterfly means *milk-thief* and *witch's breath*. The German word *Schmetterling* is connected with that popular tradition, for it is based on the Czech *smetana*, meaning cream. Thus, the bridge between a mysterious creature and its seemingly matter-of-fact name is undoubtedly established. Pursuing this method of word-study, the pupil will sometimes discover strange beauty and strange facts in commonplace or "ordinary" words, his imagination and interest will be both

stimulated and enriched, and his understanding of his own language deepened.

At a later stage of acquiring knowledge of the English language the young scholar might come across the botanical expression *papilionaceous*, and it would be a pity, if he failed to recognize the elusive butterfly, this time wrapped up in its Latin garb. In this metamorphosis the butterfly is a *papilio* or "shaker of wings", fluttering from flower to flower. The shape of butterfly and flower have become so akin in the mind of the observer—as, for instance, in the case of the pea flower—that it is described as *papilionaceous*. The butterfly-shaped and coloured leaves or petals forming the flower's *corolla* (from Latin *corolla* little crown, a diminutive of *corona* crown) make it like a butterfly resting on a stem: optically and morphologically the vegetative and the animal characteristics have become identical. The modern Greek word for butterfly *πεταλούδα* (*petalouda*) which is preferred by the man in the street to the more difficult and metaphysical conception of *ψυχή* (*psyche*) is the opposite application of the same idea, for here the butterfly becomes a winged flower. The Latin accusative of *papilio* *papilionem* yielded the English word *pavilion*. Again, its original meaning can be found in the optical sphere. Some of the medieval tents of princes and generals, often double-winged structures, appeared in the eyes of the distant onlooker like magnificent butterflies resting with outspread wings upon the hillside. It may seem a far cry from the *London Pavilion* to a tent like that of Philip II, but the tents and booths in which theatre companies of strolling players performed their shows in market towns and on fair-grounds, readily provide the associative link between the butterflies of nature and those attracted by the boards.

It is not difficult to make children see and appreciate the close connection of English civilization with that of the ancients, for our workaday language provides the evidence and will act as a permanent reminder. Sometimes it is a whole cluster of derivations springing from one root like *course*, *courser*, *corridor*, *courier*, *current*, *succour*, *precursor*, *curricule*, *discursive*, *occur*, *concur*, and others from the Latin *currere* to run; sometimes the foreign root merely supplied one isolated expression. Every morning, for instance, we eat our *cereal* to fortify ourselves with the *arma cerealia* to fight the battles of the day more vigorously. But how many people understand

the name of the meal they are eating, for *cereal* lives in lingual isolation and is unassociated with other English words, unless we connect it with *Ceres*, the Roman goddess of the corn-bearing earth and of agriculture, known to the Greeks as *Demeter*. It is one thing to know that wheat, rye, and oats are cereals, that the word-meaning is *edible grains*, and another to connect it with the wealth and symbolism of a concept that appeals to the young as well as the old children of the earth. The story of Ceres and her daughter *Proserpine* will be understood by every child in its simplicity and satisfy the maturer mind in its profundity. We may not grasp the connection between the legend and the great mysteries of Eleusis, but we shall always understand the love of the bereaved Ceres for her daughter, we may not see the symbolism of the growth of the life-giving cereals in the return of Proserpine from the Underworld, or Hell, but the child will grasp the resurrection of spring and love in nature and in the human heart.

From the utilitarian point of view such knowledge and such associations may seem of little or no value, but they will help the student to share the heritage of the past, to enter the precincts of poetry, where "dark frowning heaths grow bright with Ceres' store", and we may begin to *see* such Shakespearean lines as :

Now, my fair'st friend
I would I had some flowers o' the spring that might
Become your time of day ; and yours and yours,
That wear upon your virgin branches yet
Your maidenheads growing : O Proserpina !
For the flowers now, that frightened thou let'st fall
From Dis's waggon ! daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty.

There are, however, thousands of words which the learning mind will encounter in natural sciences when more than ever he will need the knowledge of roots in order to understand the tree. As long as such words are not restricted to a narrowly confined meaning they will remain alive. The expression *eccentric*, for instance, heard perhaps for the first time in the course of a lesson on mechanics should not become an exclusively scientific term, although it must be clearly defined as such, nor should its psychological application remain unconnected with its scientific meaning

because it explains the psychological term graphically. To an English child the word *centre*, from Greek κεντρον (kentron), Latin *centrum*, should not be less familiar than the Germanic word *middle*. The meaning of *eccentric*, Greek εκκεντρος (ekkentros) from εκ (ek) out and κεντρον (kentron) centre, as something that is not placed centrally, or has its axis outside the centre would then be as naturally conditioned in the mind as, let us say, the word *halfway*. If a circular disk is fixed *concentrically* (from Latin *con-* or *cum-* together, and *centrum* middle) on a revolving shaft the resulting movement is an irregular one. The grooves of a gramophone record are arranged *concentrically*, but if we should drill an *eccentric* hole into the disc and play it, the result would be distortion and musical chaos and the sounds unpredictable. People, too, through education and habit are more or less revolving in grooves of behaviour round a *centre* of common understanding and agreement. A person who shifts his centre or refuses to accept the common centre is soon labelled *eccentric*. As he deviates from the accepted middle he strikes his fellow beings as odd, whimsical, or queer ; his *centricity* has turned to *eccentricity*. Our fellow creatures are always ready and inclined to criticize and condemn "*centrifugal*" (from Latin *fugere* to flee) tendencies of the individual as *egocentric* and *eccentric*. In the course of a few years it should be easy to make the young scholar intimately acquainted with the entire family of words radiating from *centre* ; *egocentric*, *concentric*, *centrifugal*, *centripetal* (from Latin *petere* to seek), *eccentric*, and last but not least *concentrate*. By now the word *concentration* will have become self-explanatory as the power to collect one's thoughts in such a way that they are brought to bear upon the matter which should be in the centre of our attention in order to penetrate to the very heart of its meaning. Once we have reached this stage the direct understanding of the word *concentrate* will be as immediate as that of the word *scatter-brained*. The process of arriving at the meaning of a word in this analytical-synthetic manner has in itself a highly educative value which by far exceeds that of the mere learning of its generally applied meaning.

Following this method we find that an *oyster*, from Greek ὄστρεον (ostreon), from οστέον (osteon) a shell, bone, will lead us to *osteology*, the science of bones, and the ancient Attic practice of black-balling or rather "oyster-shelling" of a subversive politician

which has survived in our words *ostracize* and *ostracism*, from Greek οστρακίζειν (*ostrakizein*). The citizen of Attica used to record his vote on an οστράκον (*ostrakon*) a shell, a voting tablet which at a later period was replaced by a potsherd, or tile. We could, of course, dispense with the word *ostracize* and use *banish*, *expel*, or *exile* instead, but the word has established itself, and so we might just as well have a livelier conception of its root-meaning.

The teaching of history will in effect provide a wealth of words of Latin and Greek origin, since Roman and British history are so intimately linked with each other, and geography, economics, art, music, and all branches of science will furnish more material than can be attempted, let alone mastered. But words gleaned from one particular subject—to repeat the warning—must not be confined to their separate compartment, for they should be looked upon as part of a bigger scheme, as pliable, plastic matter that can be used again and again in the creation of new lingual forms.

Words like *generate* to bring into existence ; *generator* begetter, producer ; *generation* procreation, production ; *genus* kind, kin, that which has been produced or begot within the tribe or group ; *generic* characteristic of class, or kind ; *generous* liberal, noble-minded as befits one who belongs to my class, or kind, clan and tribe, should be looked upon as kinsfolk. Also *gentle* wellborn because one is an offspring of the "right" family and therefore ennobled by the right qualities indicated by that word ; *genteel*, the same idea ironically applied, in the sense of "refined" ; *degenerate* to lose the great qualities proper to the kind ; *congenital* born with, existing from birth of qualities ; *congenial* sharing the same predilections because people of the same stock share tastes ; *genuine* of true stock, or kind ; *indigenous* native, because one is born *within* (Latin *indi-*) the tribe ; they all belong to the *gen*-family. Of the same kidney are *ingenuous* frank, artless, since one can and should be so with one's own people ; *ingenious*, for people of one's kin *are* skilful and clever in contriving things, in short, endowed with *genius*, for *progenitors* (literally "before-begetters") naturally *engender* *genial* emotions in us they begot, their *progeny* or offspring. All these words should be felt as variations of one basic fact or idea : that of something that is *begot* in a process of *genesis*, of creation from one particular source. Of equally great if not greater importance, with the knowledge of the definition of

these variations, shades, and facets, should be their clearly understood root meaning *γεν-* (gen-) which should be as intense and strong as its Germanic equivalent *get* in *beget*, or the fully naturalized word *create*, from Latin *creare* to make.

It is most essential that the word should not be a mere tag, but a living thing. The word *cavalry*, for instance, should suggest *horses*, not only in a conferred sense but vividly and directly. The picture and concept of a horse therefore should be associated not only with the word *horse* or *gee-gee*, but also with the Latin *caballus*. That done, expressions like *cavalier*, *cavalcade* would be placed on concrete ground. At a later stage *chevalier* and *chivalry* should be explained before they join the horse-show. If we can add the expression *hippos* to the child's mental picture of a horse, words like *hippodrome* from Greek ἵππος (*hippos*) horse and δρόμος (*dromos*) course from δρομός (*dromas*) fast running, or *hippopotamus*, from Greek *hippos* and ποταμός (*potamos*) river, will gain the stature of life. Every boy *Philip*, old or young, will be delighted to learn that he is a "lover of horses", from Greek φίλος (*philos*) fond of and ἵππος (*hippos*) horse. Great Britain, in her great passion for horsemanship, seems to have been insatiable in the accumulation of her horsy vocabulary, for there is also the adjective *equine* to consider, from Latin *equinus* from *equus* horse, cognate with ἵππος (*hippos*) and *equestrian* from Latin *eques* a horseman. Let it be said once more that it is not the main task of the teacher to make his pupils learn the word *cavalry* and its meaning but to acquaint them so well with the foreign root that it ceases to be foreign that they can see the horses in *cavalry*. In other words there should be no need for definition, but an expression, in spite of its foreign derivation should be as self-explanatory as, let us say, horseshoe. The word *century*, for instance, chiefly because of its association with cricket, is safely and deeply rooted in the collective unconscious of the British nation, and its root is felt as a doublet for *hundred*. The Norwegian, Danish, and German words for *century*, however, are purely Germanic: *drhundre*, *Aarhundrede*, and *Jahrhundert*, literally a "yearhundred". In ancient Rome the *centuria* was a body of a hundred men, and the captain in charge of them was therefore called a *centurion*. The Latin word *centum* is, of course, particularly well moored in the English mind by its numerous associations with other words such as *centigrade*,

centipede, *percent*, *centenarian*, *centenary*, *cent*, *centime*, and others. Strangely enough, the word *centner* has never established itself in English usage, though it would be more convenient than a hundred-weight, and clinch much better with the customary abbreviation *cwt*. In German, for instance, which otherwise avoids Latin, the word *Zentner* is used, as well as in Norwegian which has *centner*.

Similarly the word *cave* from Latin *cavus* hollow, has certainly become a native term calling forth all the physical properties as well as the image of a cave, and it is therefore easy enough to make a child add on the words *concave*, *cavity*, and *excavation* (from the Latin accusative *excavationem* a hollowing out), in the same vivid way. *Concave* (from Latin *concavus*) is made more technical by its opposite *convex* (from Latin *convexus*), which remains "foreign" though it links up with *vehicle* and others, but contains no obstacles to the child's understanding, whereas German children, for instance, who have to learn the words *konvex* and *konkav* in their natural science lessons have great difficulties in not confusing the two expressions because to them they are mere tags, unless they know Latin.

It should not be difficult to "nativize" a word like *vacuum*, in spite of its undisguised Latin form and though there are some semantic obstacles, as we are apt to make its first acquaintance in the misleading shape of a *vacuum cleaner*. The idea of suction is more direct than the idea of suction into something that is empty or vacant (from Latin *vacare* to be empty) and, therefore, can hold the dust. In this respect the German and Norwegian equivalents *Staubsauger* and *støvsuger* meaning "dustsucker" are more direct and concrete. Provided, however, the right explanation is given there should be no difficulty, and words like *vacant*, *vacancy*, *vacuity*, *vacate* should fit in smoothly, as they are easily associated with the idea of *emptiness*. School children might, however, be reluctant to accept the word *vacation* as a member of that ilk, unless they look at it with the eyes of a John Milton, who regarded vacations as an unwelcome and vexatious interruption of his beloved studies; but Milton, indeed, had more Latin than most, and knew that *vacation* meant empty of work, and therefore leisure.

The word *aqua* should sound as "ordinary" to the English-speaking child as the Germanic word *water*, and then expressions like *aqueduct* and *aquarium* would become child's play. Such words

could be easily conveyed to children by means of pictures, and the next of kin: *aquatic*, *aquamarine*, *aquarelle*, *aquatint*, *Aquarius*, *aqueous*, *aqua-fortis*, *subaqueous*, and others, would fall into place quite naturally.

A very instructive excursion could be made into the territory of the words which have been built up around the word *capital*, beginning with the *capital* or "head city" (from Latin *caput* head)—as in German *Hauptstadt* (*Haupt* head, *Stadt* town, city)—and ending with *cabbage*, which is the French *cabus* round-headed, from Italian *cappuccio* a little head, a diminutive of *capo* head, from Latin *caput*. It is perhaps just as well that the latter etymology was not generally known in the seventeenth century or Cromwell's *Roundheads* would have been called *cabus* or *cabbages*. It seems, etymologically at least, that there is more similitude between "cabbages and kings" than was dreamt of in Alice's Looking-glass. The *cape* as a "head"-land would appear in a new light and so would the *Capitol* as the temple of Jupiter, the *chief* (also from *caput*) and head of the Roman gods. The *chapters* (from Latin *capitulum*) or "little heads" of a book displayed under the main heading of the title would explain themselves, and so would the head or *capital* of a pillar, and *cattle* and *chattel* would bring back the phase of economics when livestock was the accepted currency.

As soon as the curriculum enters their celestial sphere a most enthralling lesson could be found in the twelve signs of the *zodiac*, for quite a number of English words would swing into their range and appear in a new and stronger light. Astronomy is in itself a fascinating subject, but it appeals perhaps more strongly to the youthful mind when it is introduced with embellishing legends and figures. These are not inhabitants of the heavenly spheres alone but dwell also in Olympus and in English and European literature, particularly poetry. Thomson, in his *Spring*, hails the first sign of the zodiac or, as it is called in pure Latin, the *orbis signifer* (i.e. the image-bearing circle) when he sings, "at last from Aries rolls the bounteous sun." According to Greek astronomical tradition *Aries* or *Ram* is the famous winged *Chrysomallon* whose golden fleece was recaptured by Jason in his *Argonautic* expedition, an exploit that immortalized not only the ἀργοναύτης (*argonautes*) who took part in it but also the fast ship *Argo* (from ἀργός (*argos*) swift, and ναύτης (*nautes*) sailor, from ναῦς (*naus*) ship).

Taurus, Thomson's "bright Bull", indicated to the ancient Egyptians the time of their ploughing, which was done by oxen and bulls. The Latin word *taurus* has produced quite a number of expressions such as *taurian*, *tauricornus* (from *cornu* horn), *tauriform*, which are self-explanatory, and in modern times we added *Taurine*, so called because the substance of Taurine was discovered in the bile of the ox, and *Taurocol* (from Greek ταῦρος (tauros) and κόλλα (kolla) glue), a gluey substance made from bull's hide. The *Golden Bull* is, of course, no descendant of the *Golden Calf*. It and the bulls issued by the Pope are derived from the Latin *bullā* or capsule of the seal appended to the document. Later on the seal was called the *bullā*, and finally the meaning shifted from the seal to the document itself, a proper house-that-Jack-built etymology.

The *Gemini* or *Twins* (from Latin *geminus*, Greek γάμος (gamos) double) contain the two bright stars of Greek legend, Castor and Pollux, who together with Clytemnestra and Helen, emerged from Leda's two eggs. The Διόσκουροι (Dioskuroi) were two of the heroes who shared with Jason the fast ship Argo and the fame of his expedition. In addition to his place in the nocturnal sky, Pollux, as the god of the art of boxing, might be suitably honoured with a bust in the vestibule of the Albert Hall. The *Gemini* are, however, not an isolated word phenomenon in the English language. There are others like *geminous*, meaning "in pairs", *geminate* and *gmination*, very useful expressions if one wants to indicate growth in a pair-wise fashion from the same point (Jupiter and the two eggs) and *gemelliparous* twin-producing, from Latin *gemellus*, a diminutive of *geminus*, and *pario* to bring forth. A curious application of this form is found in *gemel* (Latin *gemellus*) a kind of twin finger-ring formed of two (or more) rings.

The fourth sign, *Cancer* or *Crab*, is most appropriately named, because like a crab it begins to go back sideways to the south as soon as the sun has reached its highest northern limit. Like the fifth sign, it is connected with Hercules, for Cancer was sent by Juno to attack the hero when he fought the Hydra of Lerne. Cancer bit Hercules' foot but was killed by him and taken by Juno up to heaven. The disease *carcinoma* derives its name from a very painful malignant tumour which resembles a crab with its claws extended. The various expressions we connect with this curse: *cancerate*,

cancerous, cancroid, carcinomatous, are only too painfully known to mankind. The original Greek form *καρκίνος* (*karkinos*) comes from the Sanskrit *karkata* a crab, which in turn is derived from the Sanskrit *karkara* hard, in allusion to the crab's hard shell. Phonetically it is better preserved in the English variant *canker*. *Carcinology* is the study of crustaceans.

Leo or *Lion*, from Greek *λεών* (*leon*), according to Greek mythology was originally the Nemean lion killed by Hercules. The demi-god is usually represented wearing his "shaggy spoils" the head of the lion drawn over his head like a helmet. The skin of the beast was so tough that even Hercules' formidable club made no impression on it. But the son of Zeus proved tougher still. He simply caught the lion in his arms and squeezed it to death. It was certainly a case of *ex pede Herculem* versus *ex ungue leonem*.

Virgo or *Virgin* (from the Latin accusative of *virgo* : *virginem* a maid) the sixth of the zodiacal signs appropriately yields no other words apart from *virginal* and *virginity*. The sign of the Virgo is usually represented as a winged woman in a robe holding a spike of grain in her left hand. Originally, this may have been the image of the winged Assyrian Astarte, the goddess of love and fruitful increase, which has undergone a somewhat paradoxical change of role.

Libra or *Balance*, the seventh sign, so called because in it day and night being weighed would be found equal, connects with words such as *libration*, *libratory*, and *librate*, from Latin *librare* to balance, to be poised, to move slightly when balanced, to oscillate. There is also *deliberate* that is to weigh carefully in one's mind and *level* (from Latin *libella*, a diminutive of *libra*) an instrument constructed on the principle of *libration* for determining whether a surface is truly horizontal. The same meaning of weighing, of bringing into equilibrium and oscillating is obtained from *balance*, Latin *bi-* double, twice, and *lanx* a dish, the scale of a balance.

Scorpio or *Scorpion* (from Greek *σκορπίος* *skorprios*), unlike its neighbour *Sagittarius* or *Archer*, left no mark upon the English language. The Latin word *sagittarius*, from *sagitta* an arrow, provided the useful forms *sagittal*, *sagittary*, and *sagittate* shaped like the head of an arrow, triangular, and *Archer*, from Latin *arcarius* a Bowman, from *arcus* a bow, falls in with *arc* and *arcade*.

The *Capricorn* or *Goat* (from Latin *capricornus*, *caper* goat,

cornu horn) is represented on ancient monuments by the figure of a goat, or a figure having the forepart of a goat and the hindpart of a fish. The Greeks maintain that the god Pan changed himself into a goat from fear of the giant Typhon, who was so tall that his head touched the sky. Jupiter lifted the frightened goat-god, or god-goat into the sky and made him a sign of the *orbis signifer*. Was it Greek poetic justice that the god who has been immortalized as the creator of *panic* should have become an ignoble victim of that very emotion, though it must be admitted that his fear was inspired by no mean terror, since Typhon was the father of the three-headed and three-bodied monster Geryon, the nine-headed Hydra of Lerne, the fifty-headed Cerberus, and the lion-headed, goat-bodied, dragon-tailed Chimæra.

Some important words belong to the capra-group such as *capere* to dance about like a goat, *capriole* the peculiar goat-like frisk of a horse, a combination of a high leap and kick, *caprine* of goats, and *caprice* the sudden changes of mood or conduct as unpredictable as the capers of a goat.

Aquarius or *Water-carrier* or *Water-bearer*, depicted as a man pouring water from a pitcher, perhaps a representation of *Hapi*, the god of the Nile, since the sign of the *Aquarius* appears when the waters of the Nile begin to overflow. The watery family of *aqua* has already been dealt with.

The twelfth and last zodiacal sign *Pisces* or *Fishes* in its Latin shape links up with *pisciform*, *pisciculture*, *pisciculturist*, *piscivorous* (from Latin *piscis* fish, and *voro* I devour), the adjective *piscine*, the noun *piscine* bathing-pool, *piscary* in *common of piscary*, the right of fishing in another's water, from medieval Latin *piscaria*, and *piscatorial* addicted to fishing. With *piscina* we move from the ancient Roman bathing-pool and fish-pond to the field of religion, in which the *piscina* has the function of a perforated stone basin for carrying away the water used in rinsing the chalice. In the ecclesiastic sphere we branch out into the symbolic application of the word with the *piscatory ring*, the signet ring worn by the Pope as successor of St. Peter, the *piscator* or fisherman, and the *vesica piscis* (Latin "the bladder of the fish") which was, and still is, widely used as an ecclesiastic seal, and can be seen in stained-glass windows, paintings, and sculptures, in the shape of an aureole surrounding holy figures. Altogether, the fish sign is so important

because it was the old symbol of Christ in primitive and medieval art. The significance of the symbol is to be found in the anagrammatical meaning of the Greek word for fish ἰχθύς (ichthys) :

Ἰησους	Iesous	Jesus
Χριστος	Christos	Christ
Θεου	Theou	God
Υιός	Yios	Son
Σωτηρ	Soter	Saviour

Thus, the initials of the Greek word conveyed the message that Jesus Christ was the divine son and saviour of those who believed in his teaching.

To give a more detailed and comprehensive example of the considerable use the English language can make of *one* Greek word the exceedingly large offspring of ἰχθύς (ichthys) is given in Appendix B, comprising a list of fifty-seven words.

There is, however, no need to attempt completeness or to cover the entire field of Greek and Latin contribution. It would be a Sisyphean task, for through the channels of science, medicine, art, literature, and jurisprudence new adoptions are coming into their own practically every day. Last but not least, there is the ever growing bulk of terms used in the world of advertising. Some of the freshly coined expressions are unnecessary ballast, but most of the newcomers are not wanton additions to an already far too numerous vocabulary. They are the result of constantly changing conditions, of the steadily increasing number of people who are competent, and compelled to make such contributions.

It would be tedious to quote more than one characteristic example of a tendency so obvious to every reader of newspapers and modern literature. It was, for instance, necessary to create the word *genocide* in order to formulate the United Nations indictment of the Nazi leaders who "conducted deliberate and systematic genocide—namely the extermination of racial and national groups". The older term *atrocitiy* (from Latin *atrocitatem*, from *atrox*, *atrocis* fierce) was too narrow to define the enormity of a crime that involved the planned and organized extermination of a whole ethnic group, but once more the ancient word-mines of the Greeks and the old quarries of the Romans supplied the material : Greek *geno-* from γένος (genos) meaning race, tribe, and Latin *cide* from *cædere* to kill. This word is only one selected from a multitude, and

it would be unreasonable to expect the teacher to keep abreast of all the new developments in the field of word-accretion, and to succeed where even the lexicographer fails or lags behind.

As completeness cannot and need not be achieved the teacher's goal must be—and this demand cannot be repeated too often—to foster familiarity with classical word-matter, to produce a feeling that Greek and Latin roots, even if they are unknown to the pupil are not strange, empty shells as it were without pearls. After all, the classical scholar feels at home in the entire realm of Greek and Latin literature, although he knows no more than a fraction of their vocabulary, in the same way in which a German, French, or Dutch person is on intimate terms with his own native tongue, though mastering only a comparatively small portion of its words.

Greek and Latin grammatical forms should lose their terror for all those who have escaped enlistment in the legions of Julius Cæsar. Perhaps a little dog Latin might help to reduce the awe with which most people look upon the language of Cicero. There is, for instance, the excellent definition of a kitchen as “a camera necessaria pro usus cookare; cum saucepannis, stewpannis, scullero, dressero, coalholo, stovis; pro rostandum, boilandum, fryandum, et plum-pudding-mixandum”.

It would be a good thing to make children realize that most of the words in English dictionaries were not born in Great Britain: that quite a considerable number of expressions used in everyday life were imported from Rome or Greece; that we often avail ourselves of Greek roots without being aware of it. Some of the simplest and most common English words which are in everybody's mouth were made in Greece, and yet they are not Greek to us although they should be, words such as *paste* παστή (paste) a mess of food, *currant* from Κόρινθος (korinthos), *plastic* from πλαστικός (plastikos), *clerk* from κληρικός (klerikos), *place* from πλατεία (plateia), from πλατύς (platus), and many others. The pronunciation of some of these “ordinary” English words, such as *air*, from Greek αἴρ (aer), *police* from πόλις (polis) a city, *idiot* from ἰδιώτης (idiotes), *melody* from μελωδία (melodia) a singing, from μέλος (melos) a song and ὠδή (ode), and *music* from μουσική (musike) is almost identical with that of the original Greek words. If children and adults were aware of the fact that they are already using a fair amount of Greek in their speech, they would realize

that there is no need to fight shy of Greek words that look Greek. Fortunately, the Greek language was not made by Aristophanes (c. 444-c. 380 B.C.) who is responsible for the *lepadotemachoselachogaleokranioleipsanodrimupotrimmatosilphioparaomelitokatakeclummenokichlepikeossuphophattoperisteralektruonoptegkephalokigklopeleiolagoosiraioabaletraganopterugon*, which consists of 169 letters in Greek and 179 in English writing, forming seventy-eight syllables. He used this lingual tapeworm in his play *Ekklesiiazusæ*.

There are, however, hundreds of words in the English language which can safely remain "foreigners", such as the Chinese *typhoon* from the dialect form *tai fung*, derived from *ta* great, big, and *feng* wind, or *kotow* from *k'o* knock and *t'ou* head; the Japanese *hara-kiri*, from *hara* belly and *kiri* to cut; the American-Indian *moccassin* from the Powhatan dialect *mockasin*, *tomahawk*, which in the Renape dialect is *tämähak* from *tämähakan* that "which is used for cutting", *squaw* from the Naragansett dialect *squaws* and Massachusetts *squa*, or *wigwam* from the Ojibwa *wigiwam*, literally "their house"; the African *kraal* meaning an enclosure in colonial Dutch, the Arabic *dragoman* from *targuman* translator, and Chaldee *targem* to interpret, *mufti* from *afta* to give a decision on a point of law, *minaret* from *manarrah*, *manarat*, Turkish *minare* from the root *nar* meaning fire, *hookah* from *huqqa* a pipe for smoking, cup, etc., the Persian *houri* from *huri*, Arabic *hawira* to be black-eyed like a gazelle, the Persian *bazaar* from *bazar*, the Turkish *chibouk* from *chibuk* a pipe-tube or pipe and *odalisque* a corruption of the Turkish word *odalig* from *odah*, a chamber or room of the harem and the syllable *liq*, which expresses function; the Malay *cassowary* from *kasuwaris* an ostrich-like ratite bird; the Polynesian *taboo* from the Tongan dialect word *tabu*; the Peruvian *llama* from Spanish *lyama*; the Tibetan *lama* from *blama* (the *b* is silent); the Russian *drosky* or *droszky* from *drozhki*, a diminutive of *drogi* a carriage; the Hebrew *shibboleth* the test-word used by Jephtha and *behemoth* probably the Egyptian *p'ehe-mau* a water-ox, and many others.

Words like these are not meant to be members of the national family, they are supposed to take us away from our homeland to foreign parts, conjuring up *unfamiliar* things and beings, creating an exotic atmosphere, which does not call for conscious analysis. The name Giacomo *Casanova*, for instance, adds glamour to a

glamorous personality and nothing would be gained by the knowledge that the gentleman's name in English translation is unromantically James Newhouse. It would be a pity if the Italian *broccoli* from *broccolo* a diminutive of *brocco* stalk, the Dravidian *cheroot* from Hindustani *shuruttu* roll, the Russian *vodka* from *vodá* water (distilled from rye), the Hungarian *goulash* from the Magyar *gulyas-hus* herdman's meat, and *Tokay* a wine from the town of Tokay, in Upper Hungary, lost their national flavour brought out by their foreign names. *Pepper-water* would only taste half as good as *mulligatawny*, the Tamil word of that meaning. On the other hand, no English-speaking person should look upon words like *zodiac* or *hydrocardia* as strangers, or commit the word *emetic* to his memory in the same way in which he would learn the expression *ipecacuanha*, which happens to be the same thing in the Tupi-Guarani dialect, meaning "low, creeping plant causing vomit".

As this book is chiefly concerned with the exposition of the Language Bar problem in its various aspects, the steps to be taken for its removal have been described in a general way with several more elaborate examples to circumscribe procedure and method. The examples show how the problem can be tackled by those whose important task it is to teach English to growing citizens, and to help them in their endeavour to become truly civilized, that is truly cultured beings. What is attempted therefore in this chapter is not the finished painting but a sketch with some elaborate details in the margin. To translate this plan into a practical scheme, a special course for each year of instruction would have to be worked out, supported by suitable pictorial material. The Latin and Greek roots must be arranged in more or less difficult groups of words according to the age and mental capacity of the children, and thus gradually most of the ground could be covered. The most important part of the work is, of course, that of the elementary stages, and therefore should be planned with great care and carried out with pedagogical insight and a maximum of imagination.

This new section within the teaching of English should be a combination of language teaching and general knowledge, and thus a primarily philological subject often looked upon as dry and dull and only of interest to those who have an innate understanding of languages could be made into a most fascinating study, full of general interest and infinite variety. Moreover, this branch of

instruction would not merely teach what it is setting out to teach, but at the same time provide knowledge of interesting cultural facts. It should aim at a teaching of English through universal knowledge, and a teaching of knowledge through the medium of English.

As there are many specialized branches of learning, and as specialization within these specialized branches is increasing almost daily, we are compelled to divide our approach to this world and the universe into separate departments, but we must not forget that fundamentally this world of ours is consistent and indivisible. In this respect language has a great function for, after all, our entire compass of learning is transmitted to us through the medium of the written and spoken word, and language is the vast ocean into which all drops of learning fall, in which all channels and rivers of knowledge terminate. Hence, through language and its study we can best understand that ultimately all learning, all knowledge is universal. Through language the child can most naturally acquire a glimpse of the vision that the word *uni* in universe is not a mere sound.

The advantage and necessity of such fundamental language teaching seems to be particularly great in this modern age, which is drifting further and further away from the ideal of a classical education, demanding "more plumbing and less poetry". More plumbing, indeed, is needed, but in its other sense of sounding the depth of the ocean of our intellectual and spiritual heritage. Not only those who could never afford a classical education would benefit by this new approach, but also those who subscribe to a more "up-to-date" outlook and take up a modern language in place of one of the ancient tongues. A fuller understanding of the Greek and Latin elements in the English language would help us to keep in mind what is so often forgotten nowadays : that Greek and Roman civilization are as much an integral part of British civilization as the Germanic contribution.

Moreover, the study and reading of poetry and drama would receive a fresh impulse, because the road to it, littered to an ever-increasing extent with the debris of modern machinery, is hardly passable without the guides of antiquity. The great poetry of Milton, Keats, and many other great English poets must not be relegated to the museums of our civilization, must not become dead

splendour and archaic magnificence, they must not only stay alive, but they should be given to millions who have never dreamt of entering this region of ideal opulence. How could anybody attempt to set out on the road to Xanadu and enter "the stately pleasure-dome" of imagination and divine inspiration, without general itinerary and the word that would open the gate to its grounds.

It is, of course, most essential that school teachers, who have to undertake the great task of teaching English, should be acquainted with the matter dealt with in this book, that they should have a clear understanding of the historical, sociological, and psychological background of language in general and of their native tongue in particular. There is, as we have seen, no need for a detailed study of philology, it is chiefly a matter of grasping the principles, a matter of vocabulary, and a general knowledge of English literature. Even the modern training colleges for teachers, which are working against time trying to provide for the needs of present and future generations, could and should devote some time to this most urgent and fundamentally important subject. The ground that cannot be covered at college could be explored at subsequent summer school courses. The subject-matter is interesting and useful enough to meet with the approval of the graduate teachers, particularly if they would be helped and supported in their work by school broadcasts.

Once we have achieved a higher general standard of the teaching of English, the great gulf in English civilization will be largely bridged, but the task is a difficult one, and its fulfilment will demand more time. Fortunately, as we are enjoying the benefit of an increasingly higher school-leaving age that extra time, and more, is available. But even if that additional time were not at our disposal, the task would have to be undertaken, for it is of primary importance, since it is impossible to get very far without an all-round understanding of one's own language. A civilization is not merely a matter of mental and intellectual achievement, it must also be gauged in terms of emotional and spiritual attainment, and both the brain and the heart must be weighed in a nation's balance.

Great Britain has, indeed, achieved a high standard of homogeneous "culture of the heart" and a behaviour springing from

that heart, but as long as the language bar prevails, the corresponding culture of the intellect cannot be adequately achieved.

It would be unrealistic to demand that every English-speaking person should acquire a deeper knowledge of his or her native tongue, but we can hardly be satisfied with a standard of literacy that does not make it possible for the average person to draw upon the national literature of his country. In our educational scheme *literacy and literature, which are cognate terms, must become cognate conceptions*, and the learning of letters in primary schools must be the first step leading to a more or less profound acquaintance with the realm of letters before we can make any claims of genuine cultural achievement. Unless we expand our definition of literacy beyond the mere "ability to read and write", unless we make it embrace literature and letters we have failed in our ultimate educational task.

If we gauged the level of our civilization on a superficial attainment of literacy the Japanese, for instance, could boast of a higher degree of cultural accomplishment than most countries, for 99 per cent of their children attended school before the last war broke out. This apparent promise of a high educational standard in Nippon does not, however, fulfil our expectations because the literacy achieved is wholly inadequate. A closer analysis shows that 90 per cent of the Japanese population are in fact not even semi-literate, since their teachers, on account of the inordinate difficulties of Japanese writing, cannot hope to equip their pupils with more than one thousand ideographic characters. This basic knowledge will help them to decipher most newspaper headlines and advertisements but it will not enable them to read the article below the headline, to tackle the average book, let alone works of literary value and importance.

The extreme character of the Japanese educational problem should not induce us to minimize and therefore neglect the English language bar problem, for it is more acute, and its solution is of even greater urgency if we give full consideration to Western economy, and apply European standards of education. Economically the consequences of a one-tenth literacy in Japan is perhaps less disastrous than the imperfect literacy in countries whose cultural life is based on the acquisition of the English language, the language of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Shelley.

If one day we should be able to dissolve this cultural discord caused by the language bar, if through a fuller knowledge of our language we could carry "from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas" and ideals, if, in the words of Matthew Arnold, we have made this knowledge "efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned", then we have truly "humanized" it, and transformed it into "a true source of sweetness and light".

CHAPTER NINE

BEYOND THE LANGUAGE BAR

He who does not know the force of words, cannot know men.
Confucius, Analects, xx, 3.

This book would be incomplete if it did not touch upon one sphere of life expressed in language which is closely connected with the problems of the language bar and yet, at the same time, takes us beyond it.

Words are not only the vehicle of definite meaning, on the contrary, they can be used to form a verbal smoke screen. Prince Metternich was not the only statesman who employed words merely to hide the inward workings of his diplomatic brain. The politician and the diplomat, who are sometimes compelled to speak when they are not allowed to say anything, by sheer necessity of professional expediency have been persuaded to turn language into camouflage. Unfortunately, there are still millions of people who are quite satisfied if somebody says something without saying anything, because they are unable to see or hear the difference. "The tale told by an idiot signifying nothing," is still a very popular story. Such word expenditure, however, is no more than a waste of breath contaminating the "invisible air", an acoustic illusion of sense or meaning where there is none, and we have seen in Chapter Six, to what an extent the language bar acts in unintentional subservience to this unwholesome practice.

A combination of words, though it may not make sense in a reasonable way nevertheless may produce a definite effect, if it is charged with feeling, if it makes a strong appeal to our emotions, to the animal or primitive side of our nature. It needs no further elaboration to show that the condition and nature of the English language in a way favours the emotional response, for whenever sense and meaning are not apparent, sound and suggestion have unlimited scope. Here we touch upon, or rather enter into, the misty regions of magic and the acoustic power of words, which however little we may know about it, is a very definite reality. We

can observe its efficacy in all phases of modern life, though to the casual observer it is perhaps not as obvious as it still is in countries which have not severed their links with the magical past.

There have always been speakers and orators who were able to put their listeners into a state of passive receptiveness commonly described as "spellbound", who were able to produce conditions of agreement in their audience ranging from rapt enthusiasm to hysterical acceptance of self-immolation, but the present century has reached the culmination point of sound intoxication and word hypnotism, called forth by such widely divergent phenomena as Frank Sinatra and Adolf Hitler. If Hitler's speeches, for instance, had been delivered in a normal tone of voice, their effect would have been negligible. An analysis of the recorded speeches, or rather eruptions, of the German dictator has shown that pitch, volume of sound, timbre of voice are frequently not in keeping with the meaning of his words and the sense of his sentences, and yet the effect upon the crowd was just as powerful. If Hitler had read out a cookery book with his usual delivery, his sound volleys and hysterical screams, it is quite likely that the result would have been the same, for in any case the average person listening to his diatribes and perorations would have been unable to state *what* had been said. Besides, the magnetic effect of his harangues lay not so much in the *what* than in the *how*, not in the matter but in the manner of his performance. After all, it does not make any difference what Sinatra utters as long as he produces certain vibrations, which unfailingly release powerful responses in the bodies or minds of millions of people.

It cannot be denied that in spite of modern progress, in spite of telespeaking and televising all men in some way or other, to a higher or lesser degree, have preserved the atavistic response to sound, in tune of course with the stage of civilization they have attained. Since this response to a very considerable extent is connected with the subconscious mind, its effectiveness is much greater than generally supposed, and the ruling forces at work in this century of applied psychology have not been slow in making full use of their opportunities. After all, how many people, if any, can reasonably explain why the voice of a Sinatra affects their minds, or rather produces a visceral reaction, why the voice of a Hitler should have the powerful effect it actually has.

The leaders of civilizations more primitive than ours knew more about these sound effects than the sound engineers of a broadcasting corporation, with the possible exception of that of Walt Disney's acoustic department, for in those days of a generally lower intellectual level the main appeal to the masses had to be made in this manner. The gradual ascendancy of the brain has somewhat changed the position, though even the most primitive noises of forgotten worlds have retained their direct and often disturbing appeal for modern man : many sound phenomena produced by animals in a state of excitement, the sound of angry voices, the nerve-shattering screams of a person in agony, the voice of a human being stricken by terror, uncontrollable laughter, and many more. We modern men must *know* about these latent responses and impulses in us, or we run the risk of being overcome by them unawares. It would be a great mistake to think that the primitive appeal in Hitler's voice, for instance, merely penetrated into the minds of the uneducated or simple. We must never forget that there is an unbroken tradition of sound response in us that connects the animal kingdom with that of man, and within the human range of experience passes from magic formulæ to pagan ritual, and from pagan ritual to litany, a response which the "expert" is able to resuscitate by means of words and other acoustic effects.

In the course of thousands of years man has become so accustomed to the existence of a language connecting him with the spheres of magic, and successively and simultaneously with those of the supernatural and the divine that his need for " holy words " developed into a basic necessity as great as that for other words covering the needs of everyday life, work, and general activity.

We saw, in Chapter Two, how Latin became such a "*lingua sacra*", how people developed an attitude of veneration to the sounds of an unintelligible language, for the words they heard had no intellectual significance whatever. Latin, though a language bar *per se* for the common people, nevertheless powerfully affected their minds. It is obvious that such an attitude in the unlettered could be used for better or worse, for the attainment of the loftiest, selfless goal as well as for the accomplishment of the most sinister, self-seeking purpose. A docile, mentally and intellectually immature people could be easily led in the one or other direction.

With growing awareness, however, people demanded their share of conscious spiritual life, and in the process of the realization of this demand the Bible was given to them in the vulgar tongue, and theological writers like Wyclif, Latimer, and Pecoek did everything in their power to open the doors of religious discussion to all those who wished to enter and take part. The Bible became the university of the common man, and his sole means of striving after universality. The dumb, inarticulate urge towards spirituality was slowly turning into a conscious desire for it, and a *lingua sacra* which he could not understand was being replaced by a holy language which he was able to grasp.

Centuries of Bible reading, of prayer-book, of religious hymns have produced a traditional knowledge of a sacred language in the average person, a language which provided a medium meant to establish some contact between this concrete world of everyday life and the one that transcends it. A language suggestive of such a world in itself becomes something holy and transcendental, and it is a great spiritual loss, if such a language, either a *lingua sacra* or a sacred language, goes out of our life, for with it the bridge that connects us with the religious-spiritual world has been withdrawn. Though the bridge has disappeared, the age-old demand for a language of sound and suggestion is still there, but as it is now being frustrated, the danger arises that into the resulting vacuum another irrational though not religious force may pour in, eagerly received by that vacuum. The steadily increasing scepticism nourished by the great progress of scientific research, the resulting decrease of religious feeling taking place in millions of people created a situation only too favourable to the establishment of powers which availed themselves of the ancient technique of sound-response with disastrous success.

In former days the field of spirituality had been effectually guarded by those who were in charge of religion, because they were more or less able to reach *everybody*, whereas now in this age of growing indifference to religion the spiritual layer of the world has become more vulnerable.

The danger would not be so acute if there were a protective layer between the instinctive, emotional, intellectual, on the one hand, and the spiritual parts of the human entity on the other, acting as an invisible armour.

In Chapter Six we have been able to study the nature and importance of such a protective screen against spiritual barrenness in the case of Thomas Hobbes and Charles Darwin. A serious occupation with meditative and contemplative poetry as well as a sincere study of the fine arts do provide a link between an intellectual and a metaphysical approach to the world, for like the language of religion, poetry and the arts try to convey, to suggest what in itself is inexplicable, because we are forced to employ means of expression which are too much bound up with the sensual world. Great poets, painters, and musicians very often make the attempt, and sometimes succeed, in *transcending* all meaning expressed in their words, colours, and music by the additional creation of an atmosphere or mood which *reveals* a higher significance. It is this quality, the attribute of all creation, which makes them godlike and truly divine.

A person, though he may lose "religion" in the generally accepted sense of the word but breathes and lives in the sphere of poetry or in the realm of artistic creation, does not sever his ties with the divine, does not leave the abode of spirituality. People, however, who are strangers in the realm of fancy, who have never learnt to travel on the high roads of imagination, and one day find themselves without religious guidance, even if their mental and intellectual capacity is highly developed, will soon be in sore distress and spiritually suffocate in the alluring and at the same time repulsive embrace of materialism, which will perhaps drug but never fully satisfy their intellect.

It is not difficult to realize what happens to the masses of people no longer bound by religion to whom also the temple of the Muses and the gardens of the arts are forbidden habitation and untrodden precinct: they are condemned to wade through the shallow bog of a soulless unsatisfactory life, speeded up but not enriched by the amenities and comforts of the machine age. Somehow they feel that they are lacking and missing the very experience that would lend their lives a touch of greatness for, after all, their ancestors have partaken of it time and again.

In that state of mind they easily fall victims to those who unscrupulously exploit their deficiency, filling their spiritually starved minds with propaganda instead of ethics, and their brains with high sounding slogans instead of words of wisdom, feeding them with stones instead of bread, and instead of a true realization

of divine humanity, they are being cheated with the reflected glory of a superman-bogy-hero. Their latent innate spiritual energies, which should be employed for their own personal salvation and that of their fellow-men, are harnessed to the war chariot of an inflated tin-god, who in the end contemptuously brings about the destruction of his worshippers.

Recent history should have taught us that we cannot afford to allow people to grow up with such dangerous gaps in their humanity, that we cannot any longer rely entirely on a hierarchical *élite* or on an aristocratic set, for they have not been able to retain sufficient power to enforce their high principles where they failed to persuade. We must try to equip people with *all* the elements needed for the creation of a homogeneous personality, a task that can only be accomplished if we neglect none of the main features of man : instinctive, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual. Once they are functioning as they should, they become co-ordinated in manifold and intricate ways, but they do not condition one another, though the under-development or frustration of one is bound to affect the others. Psychological research has shown that mere emotionalism, if such an exclusive state of mind were possible, does not presuppose an intellectual or a spiritual response as well, and we can imagine an intellectualism which is almost devoid of emotional and spiritual features, but we cannot think, in a generally analytical way, of poetry and the arts without claiming for them all three : the emotional, intellectual, and spiritual components. They are, therefore, with religion, also in the spiritual sphere. Thus, a person who for some reason or other temporarily or permanently finds himself bereft of his religion would still remain in the sphere of spirituality.

Though it is an undisputed fact that there has been an appreciable numerical decline in the province of religion, no such assertion could be made with regard to poetry and the fine arts, on the contrary, a steadily growing interest in the realm of such minor deities as the Muses is one of the most outstanding developments of our time, an interest which is by no means a purely mythological one.

It should be very interesting, if we could find out, whether the decrease in religious fellowship is quantitatively balanced by a corresponding increase in the numbers of those who have taken up poetry, drama, philosophy, and the arts. I venture to surmise that

the number of people who have turned away from religion is considerably greater than those who have entered the adjoining domain of spirituality.

In the "old days" practically all the inhabitants of, let us say, a small town would regularly, or at least sporadically, go to church, listen to sacred music, to holy words, as well as read the Bible, but to-day perhaps only one-tenth of all those who have abandoned religion would be found in theatres, concert halls, picture galleries, and museums. The others would seek refuge and escape in picture palaces, music halls, shooting galleries, and waxwork museums, which means that to-day a considerable number of people are no longer in touch with any source of spiritual life. Consequently, the stature of such human beings has lost its height and its summit seems to be shrouded in a mist partly composed of the vapours of intellectual ambition and sensual pleasures.

The gaps, therefore, in the religious armour must be filled by laying the foundations of a literary and artistic education as early as we can, at least as early as those of religion. Furthermore, we must supplement this primary safeguard against spiritual vacuity by a drive for increased adult education. The founders of the people's colleges mentioned in Chapter Six have rightly felt the great need for such a generally cultural education, with the emphasis on the spiritual side of it, a need which in our time has become an urgent necessity. The brave venture of literary and other educational institutes, the vast efforts within the framework of army education must be intensified and emulated in eager pursuit of a high aim.

It need not be repeated any more that the basic condition for the accomplishment of such an aim is the acquisition of the English language in general and its literary and philosophical form in particular. Poetry, works on the fine arts, as well as meditative, contemplative, and philosophical literature are not usually written in a language of great simplicity, and it is also clear that the English language offers particularly great obstacles in the field of spiritual endeavour.

We have studied the obstacles encountered in the various departments of scientific study and research, we have met them on the political platform, in the arena of social intercourse, and in the domain of poetry, and last but not least we find them in the realm of speculative thought and religious quest.

No man can be regarded as mature and complete unless his spiritual side is adequately developed and nourished, a side which, if neglected, is so easily usurped by pretentious, pseudo-religious fabrications. Our lingual preparation must be of such a kind and quality that no human being need be neglected or thwarted in the pursuit of his various aspirations.

This may sound Utopian, and may be looked upon as too extreme a demand, but closer investigation will show that it is indeed the minimum to be demanded, because it does not imply that everybody will succeed in fulfilling himself; it simply postulates that every individual be given a chance to set out in quest of his true personality.

After all, we have passed the ages when the cultural achievement of a civilization, of a nation, of a race was identical with the achievement of the *élite*, the great spiritual, artistic, and intellectual minds of such a nation or race. If we want to give a deeper meaning to democracy, if we aspire to make it an ideal worth dying for, and in an even more vital sense, worth living for, then we must do everything in our power to permeate the entire nation with its civilization, then we must see to it that *all* have the opportunity to share that civilization in *all* its aspects and manifestations, a goal only to be reached by the good offices of a *generous education without reservation*, embracing all matter that will lay the foundation for a fuller and greater life; but before we can hope to fulfil that most desirable and noble purpose, we must remove the language bar.

APPENDIX A

August Wilhelm von Schlegel's translation of the Osric scene from
Hamlet, in Act v, ii.

Osrick kommt.

Osrick : Willkommen Eurer Hoheit hier in Dänmark.

Hamlet : Ich dank' Euch ergebenst, Herr. — Kennst du diese Mücke ?

Horatio : Nein, bester Herr.

Hamlet : Um so besser ist für dein Heil gesorgt, denn es ist ein Laster ihn zu kennen. Er besitzt viel und fruchtbares Land : wenn ein Tier Fürst der Tiere ist, so wird seine Krippe neben des Königs Gedeck stehen. Er ist eine Elster, aber, wie ich dir sage, mit weitläufigen Besitzungen von Kot gesegnet.

Osrick : Geliebtester Prinz, wenn Eure Hoheit Musse hätte, so wünschte ich Euch etwas von Seiner Majestät mitzuteilen.

Hamlet : Ich will es mit aller Aufmerksamkeit empfangen, Herr. Eure Mütze an ihre Stelle ; sie ist für den Kopf.

Osrick : Ich danke Eurer Hoheit, es ist sehr heiss.

Hamlet : Nein, auf mein Wort, es ist sehr kalt ; der Wind ist nördlich.

Osrick : Es ist ziemlich kalt, in der Tat, mein Prinz.

Hamlet : Aber doch, dünkt mich, es ist ungemein schwül und heiss, oder mein Temperament—

Osrick : Ausserordentlich, gnädiger Herr ; es ist sehr schwül — auf gewisse Weise — ich kann nicht sagen wie. Gnädiger Herr, Seine Majestät befahl mir, Euch wissen zu lassen, dass er eine grosse Wette auf Euren Kopf angestellt hat. Die Sache ist folgende, Herr :—

Hamlet : Ich bitte Euch, vergesst nicht !

(Hamlet nötigt ihn, den Hut aufzusetzen.)

Osrick : Erlaubt mir, wertester Prinz, zu meiner eigenen Bequemlichkeit. Vor kurzem, Herr, ist Laertes hier an den Hof gekommen — auf meine Ehre, ein vollkommener Kavalier, von den vortrefflichsten Auszeichnungen, von einer sehr gefälligen Unterhaltung und glänzendem Aussern. In der Tat, um mit Sinn von ihm zu sprechen, er ist die Musterkarte der feinen Lebensart, denn Ihr werdet in ihm den Inbegriff aller Gaben finden, die ein Kavalier nur wünschen kann zu sehn.

Hamlet : Seine Erörterung, Herr, leidet keinen Verlust in Eurem Munde, ob ich gleich weiss, dass es die Rechenkunst des Gedächtnisses irremachen würde, ein vollständiges Verzeichnis seiner Eigenschaften aufzustellen. Und doch würde es nur aus dem Groben sein, in Rücksicht seines behenden Fluges. Aber, im heiligsten

Ernste der Lobpreisung, ich halte ihn für einen Geist von grossem Umfange, und seine innere Begabung so köstlich und selten, dass, um uns wahrhaft über ihn auszudrücken, nur sein Spiegel seinesgleichen ist, und wer sonst seiner Spur nachgehn will, sein Schatten, nichts weiter.

Osrick : Eure Hoheit spricht ganz untrüglich von ihm.

Hamlet : Der Betreff, Herr ? Warum lassen wir den rauhen Atem unserer Rede über diesen Kavalier gehen ?

Osrick : Prinz ?

Hamlet : Was bedeutet die Nennung dieses Kavaliers ?

Osrick : Des Laertes ?

Horatio : Sein Beutel ist schon leer : alle seine goldnen Worte sind ausgegeben.

Hamlet : Ja, des nämlichen.

Osrick : Ich weiss, Ihr seid nicht unterrichtet —

Hamlet : Ich wollte, Ihr wüsstet es, Herr, ob es mich gleich, bei meiner Ehre ! noch nicht sehr empfehlen würde. — Nun wohl, Herr !

Osrick : Ihr seid nicht unterrichtet, welche Vollkommenheit Laertes besitzt —

Hamlet : Ich darf mich dessen nicht rühmen, um mich nicht mit ihm an Vollkommenheit zu vergleichen : einen andern Mann aus dem Grunde kennen, hiesse sich selbst kennen.

Osrick : Ich meine Herr, was die Führung der Waffen betrifft ; Nach der Bemessung, die man ihm erteilt, ist er darin ohnegleichen.

Hamlet : Was ist seine Waffe ?

Osrick : Degen und Stossklinge.

Hamlet : Das wären denn zweierlei Waffen ; doch weiter.

Osrick : Der König, Herr, hat mit ihm sechs Barberhengste gewettet ; wogegen er, wie ich höre, sechs französische Degen samt Zubehör, als Gürtel, Gehenke und so weiter, verpfändet hat. Drei von den Gestellen sind in der Tat dem Auge sehr gefällig, den Gefässen sehr angemessen, unendlich zierliche Gestelle, und von sehr geschmackvoller Erfindung.

Hamlet : Was nent Ihr die Gestelle ?

Horatio : Ich wusste, Ihr würdet Euch noch an seinen Randglossen erbauen müssen, ehe das Gespräch zu Ende wäre.

Osrick : Die Gestelle sind die Gehenke.

Hamlet : Der Ausdruck würde schicklicher für die Sache sein, wenn wir eine Kanone an der Seite führen könnten ; bis dahin lasst es immer Gehenke bleiben. Aber weiter : sechs Barberhengste gegen sechs französische Degen, ihr Zubehör, und drei geschmackvoll erfundene Gestelle : das ist eine französische Wette gegen eine dänische. Weswegen haben sie dies verpfändet, wie Ihr's nennt ?

Osrick : Der König, Herr, hat gewettet, dass Laertes in zwölf Stössen von beiden Seiten nicht über drei vor Euch voraushaben soll ;

er hat auf zwölf gegen neun gewettet ; und es würde sogleich zum Versuch kommen, wenn Eure Hoheit zur Erwiderung geneigt wäre.

Hamlet : Wenn ich nun erwidre : nein ?

Osrick : Ich meine, gnädiger Herr, die Stellung Eurer Person zu dem Versuche.

Hamlet : Ich will hier im Saale auf und ab gehn ; wenn es Seiner Majestät gefällt, es ist jetzt bei mir die Stunde frische Luft zu schöpfen. Lasst die Rapiere bringen ; Hat Laertes Lust, und bleibt der König bei seinem Vorsatze, so will ich für ihn gewinnen, wenn ich kann ; wo nicht, so werde ich nichts als die Schande und die überzähligen Stösse davontragen.

Osrick : Soll ich Eure Meinung so erklären ?

Hamlet : In diesem Sinne, Herr, mit Ausschmückungen nach Eurem Geschmack.

Osrick : Ich empfehle Eurer Hoheit meine Ergebenheit. *Ab.*

Hamlet : Der Eurige. Er tut wohl daran, sie selbst zu empfehlen ; es möchte ihm sonst kein Mund zu Gebote stehn.

Horatio : Dieser Kiebitz ist mit der halben Eierschale auf dem Kopfe aus dem Nest gelaufen.

Hamlet : Er machte Umstände mit seiner Mutter Brust, eh er daran sog. Auf diese Art hat er, und viele andre von demselben Schlage, in die das schale Zeitalter verliebt ist, nur den Ton der Mode und den äusserlichen Schein der Unterhaltung erhascht : eine Art aufbrausender Mischung, die sie durch die blödesten und gesichtetsten Urtheile mitten hindurch führt ; aber man treibe sie nur zu näherer Prüfung und die Blasen platzen.

APPENDIX B

ἰχθύς (ichthys) a fish

Ichthyic Characteristic of fishes ; piscine.

ichthyal adj. Of, pertaining to fishes.

ichthyan adj. Of, pertaining to fishes.

ichthydin, ichthyin, ichthylin Names of albuminoid substances got from egg-yolk of various fishes.

ichthyocoprolite The fossilized excrement of a fish. From κοπρος (kopros) dung, λίθος (lithos) stone.

ichthyocoprous adj.

ichthyodont A fossil tooth of a fish. From Greek ὀδοντ (odont) tooth.

ichthyolatry The worship of fishes, or of a fish-god, as *Dagon*, from Hebrew *dagon* little fish, dear little fish, from *dag* fish. *Dagon* was the national deity of the ancient Philistines, represented with the head, chest, and arms of a man, and the tail of a fish.

ichthyomancy Divination by means of the head, or entrails of fishes. From μαντεία (manteia) prophetic power, from Greek μαντις (mantis) a seer, literally thinker.

ichthyomantic adj.

ichthyophthiran Zoology. Belonging to the crustacean order of *ichthyophthira*, i.e. parasites upon fishes. From φθεῖρ (phtheir) the Greek word for louse.

ichthyotomist An anatomist of fishes. From Greek τομος (tomos) cutting.

ichthyotomy The anatomy of fishes.

ichthyotaxidermy The taxidermy or stuffing of the skins of fishes as zoological specimens. From Greek τάξις (taxis) order, arrangement and δέρμα (derma) skin.

ichthyocolla Fish-glue ; isinglass. From Greek κολλα (kolla) glue.

ichthyodorylite, ichthyodorulite A fossil spine of a fish or fish-like vertebrate. From Greek δόρυ (dory) spear.

ichthyographer A writer on fishes.

ichthyography The description of fishes. From Greek γραφία (graphia) from γράφειν (graphein) to describe.

ichthyographic Descriptive of fishes.

ichthyoid (a) Fish-like, (b) a vertebrate of the fish type.

ichthyoidal Fish-like.

ichthyol A brownish-yellow syrupy liquid obtained from the dry distillation of bituminous rocks containing remains of fossil fishes.

ichthyolite A fossil fish.

ichthyolitic adj.

ichthyology (a) The natural history of fishes as a branch of zoology, (b) the ichthyological features of a district.

ichthyological adj.

ichthyologically adv.

ichthyologist An exponent, or student, in ichthyology.

ichthyomorphic (a) Having the form of a fish, as the fish-god *Dagon*,

(b) possessing the zoological features of fishes. From Greek μορφή (morphē) shape.

ichthyophagi Fish-eaters. From Greek φάγος (phagos) eating.

ichthyophagan Fish-eater.

ichthyophagist Fish-eater.

ichthyophagite Fish-eater.

ichthyophagous Fish-eating.

ichthyophagy The practice of eating fish.

ichthyophthalmite Apophyllite. From Greek οφθαλμός (ophthalmos) the eye.

ichthyopsida The lowest of the three primary groups of vertebrata in Huxley's classification. From Greek όψις (opsis) appearance.

ichthyopsid, *ichthyopsidan*, *ichthyopsidian* adjectives.

ichthyopterygia An order of extinct marine reptiles.

ichthyopterygian An order of extinct marine reptiles, so named from the paddle- or fin-like character of the digits of the fore and hind limbs, the type of which is the *ichthyosaurus*. From Greek πτερύγιον (pterygion) wing, fin.

ichthyornis An extinct order of toothed birds (*Odontornites*) belonging to the sub-class *Odontotormæ*, having socketed teeth and biconcave vertebræ, the remains of which occur in the cretaceous rocks of North America. From Greek όρνιθος (ornithos) bird.

ichthyornithic adj.

ichthyornithid A bird of the family *Ichthyornithidæ*.

ichthyosaur, *ichthyosaurus* A genus of extinct marine animal, combining the characters of Saurian reptiles and of fishes with some features of whales, and having an enormous head, a tapering body, four paddles, and a long tail. (Found chiefly in *Lias*.) From Greek σαύρος (sauros), σαύρα (saura) lizard.

ichthyosaurian adj.

ichthyosaurid An animal of that family.

ichthyosauroid Having form and characters of an *ichthyosaurus*.

ichthyosis In pathology a congenital disease of the skin in which the epidermis assumes a dry and horny appearance; also called fish-skin disease or porcupine disease.

ichthyotic Subject to or affected with ichthyosis.

INDEX

- Abelard (Abailard), Peter, 10.
Accedence Commenced Grammar, 26.
Achilles in Scyros, 81.
 Addison, Joseph, 78, 113.
Ad Patrem, 25.
Advancement of Learning, The, 23.
Ælfric, 8, 45.
 Aelian (Claudius Aelianus), 59.
Aeneid, 97.
 Aeschylus, 76, 79.
 Aethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, 8.
 Albertus Magnus, 59.
 Alcuin, 7.
 Alfred the Great, 7, 8, 45.
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, 33.
 Anacreon, 78.
Analects, 141.
Anatomy of Melancholy, The, 22.
Ancrene Riwele, or Ancrene Wisse,
 11, 104.
Annales, 18.
Anne of Bohemia, 15.
 Anne, Queen, 55.
 Anselm, 9.
 Arbuthnot, John, 55, 56.
Arcadia, 67.
 Archimedes, 58.
Argenis, 22, 23, 67.
 Aristophanes, 17, 77, 135.
 Aristotle, 10, 11, 54, 57, 59, 60, 61.
 Arnold, Matthew, 140.
 Arthur and the Arthurian Legend, 11.
 Ascham, Roger, 18, 19, 20.
Astrolabe, 65.
As You Like It, 24.
Authorized Version, The, 22.
Autobiography (Darwin), 85.
 Bacon, Francis, Baron Verulam,
 Viscount St. Albans, 23, 67, 99.
 Bacon, Roger, 10.
 Baldwin, Archbishop, 10.
 Ballantyne, James, 27.
 Ballantyne, John, 27.
 Barclay, John, 22, 67.
 Barker, E. H., 76.
 Barnes, William, 103.
 Bartok, Bela, 89.
Basic English, 100, 101, 110.
 Beaulieu, Guichard de, 12.
 Bede or Baeda, the Venerable, 7.
 Beethoven, Ludwig van, 86, 91.
Behemoth, or the Long Parliament, 90.
 Bentley, Richard, 76, 77.
 Bible, The, 8, 13, 17, 18, 22, 82, 98,
 99, 103, 107, 144.
 Blake, William, 82.
 Blomfield, C. J., 76.
Book of Common Prayer, The, 18, 144.
 Boorde, Andrew, 37.
 Boswell, James, 29, 40.
 Boyle, Robert, 57.
 Bridges, Robert, 81, 82.
Britannia, 18.
 British Museum, 107.
 Britten, Benjamin, 90.
 Browne, Sir Thomas, 26, 27, 73,
 74, 83.
 Browning, Elizabeth Barrett, 80.
Brut, the Brutus Legend, 11.
 Bruyère, Jean de la, 53.
 Buchanan, George, 18.
 Bull, George, 27.
 Bull, John, 55.
 Bunyan, John, 22, 82.
 Burke, Edmund, 107.
 Burns, Robert, 106.
 Burton, Robert, 22.
 Butler, Samuel, 7, 86, 102.
 Byron, George Gordon, Lord Byron,
 77, 79.
Caesalpinus, Andreas, 60
 Cambridge, University of, 10.

- Camden, William, 18.
 Campion, Thomas, 21.
 Capgrave, John, 16.
Caractacus, 78.
 Carey, Henry, 27.
 Carew, Richard, 18.
 Carlyle, Thomas, 102.
 Carroll, Lewis (Charles Lutwidge Dodgson), 33, 48, 129.
 Carter, Elizabeth, 77.
 Casanova de Seingalt, Giacomo, 135, 136.
Castle of Indolence, The, 120.
Castle of Love, 47.
 Catullus, 19.
 Cavendish, Henry, 57.
 Caxton, William, 16, 105.
 Chapman, George, 36.
 Chaucer, Geoffrey, 15, 18, 33, 65, 98, 139.
 Cheeke, Sir John, 18, 20.
 Cheyne, Dr. George, 55.
Choral Symphony, The, 86.
Chronicle, The, 9.
Chrononhotonthologos, 27.
 Cicero, 17, 18, 22, 26, 29.
 Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 22, 26, 48, 50, 66, 74, 79, 107, 138.
 Collins, William, 78.
Compleat Gentleman, The, 25.
Complete English Gentleman, 28.
Concerto for Orchestra, 89.
Confessio Amantis, 15.
 Confucius, 141.
 Conrad, Joseph (Teodor Josef Konrad Korzeniowski), 118.
 Copernicus (Nicolas Koppernik), 58.
 Cornwaile, John, 14.
 Corvo, Baron, see Rolfe, 81.
 Coverdale, Miles, 18.
 Cowley, Abraham, 26, 78.
 Cowper, William, 77, 109.
 Cranmer, Thomas, 17.
 Croker, John Wilson, 29.
 Cromwell, Oliver, 13, 129.
 Cromwell, Gregory, 17.
 Crookes, Sir William, 57.
 Ctesibios, 58.
Cursor Mundi (The Cursor o' the World), 12.
Daily Mail, The, 94.
Daily Mirror, The, 94.
Daily Telegraph, The, 94.
 Dalton, John, 57.
 Daniel, Samuel, 19.
 Darwin, Charles, 31, 85, 90, 145.
 Debussy, Claude, 91.
Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, The, 112.
De Exidio Britanniae, 7.
 Defoe, Daniel, 28, 97, 107.
De Magnete Magneticisque Corporibus, 23.
 Demeter, 81.
 Democritus, 57.
 Demosthenes, 18.
 De Natura Animalium, 59.
De orbium coelestium revolutionibus, 58.
De Plantis, 60.
De Religione Gentilium, 23.
De Sapientia Veterum, 23.
Deserted Village, The, 84.
De Veritate, 23.
 Dioscorides, 60.
Discovery of the Large, Rich and Beautiful Empire of Guiana, 22.
 Disney, Walt, 119, 143.
 Dobree, Peter Paul, 76.
 Dominicans, or Black Friars, 10.
 Dryden, John, 24, 26, 29, 66, 86, 87, 97, 101.
 Earle, John, 59.
Ekklesiastusæ, 135.
 Edgar, King, 8.
Edinburgh Review, The, 29.
 Edward I, King, 13.
 Edward II, King, 13.
 Edward III, King, 13.
 Eliot, T. S., 90.
 Elizabeth, Queen, 19.
 Elyot, Sir Thomas, 17.

- English Grammar* (Ben Jonson), 24.
English Grammar (Lindley Murray), 30.
English Malady, The, 55.
Englishman's Pocket Latin-English and English-Latin Dictionary, The, 112.
 Epictetus, 77.
Epipsychidion, 79.
Epistola ad Millium, 76.
Epitaphium Damonis, 25, 29.
 Erasmus, Desiderius, 17, 19.
 Eratosthenes, 58.
Eros and Psyche, 81.
Eskubalauron, 27.
Esperanto, 110.
Essay Concerning the Nature of Aliments, 55.
Euphormionis Satyricon, 22.
 Euripides, 76, 77.
Excellency of the English Tongue, The, 18.

Feast of Bacchus, The, 81.
 Fleming, Abraham, 40.
Fit to Fly, 56.
Form of Living, The, 12.
 Fortescue, John, 16.
 Fox, Charles James, 77.
 Franciscans, or Grey Friars, 10.
 Freeman, Augustus, 102.
French Grammar, 47.
 Frontinus, Sextus Julius, 59.

 Galen or Galenus, Claudius, 55.
 Gascoigne, George, 19.
Gawayne, Sir, and the Grene Knight, 11.
 Geoffrey of Monmouth, 9, 11.
 Geoffrey, 9.
 Gerald of Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis), 10.
 Gibbon, Edward, 54, 111, 112.
 Gilbert, William, 23.
 Gildas, 7.
 Gill, Alexander, 104, 105.
 Glasse, Henry, 78.

 Godfrey, 9.
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 76, 109.
Götterdämmerung, 86.
 Goldsmith, Oliver, 84.
 Gower, John, 9, 15, 64.
Grammar of Science, 62.
Grammar of the English Tongue, 30.
 Gray, Thomas, 29, 78.
 Grow, Malcolm C., 56.

 Hall, Edward, 19.
 Hall, Joseph, 23.
Hamlet, 38, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 75, 106, 149, 150, 151.
 Hampton, James, 76.
Handlyng Synne, 12.
 Hazlitt, William Carew, 77.
 Henry IV, King, 15.
Henry IV, 89.
 Henry VIII, King, 17, 19.
 Herbert, Edward, 23.
 Herman, 9.
 Hermes Trismegistes, 57.
 Heron of Alexandria, 58, 59.
 Hesiod, 17.
 Higden, Ranulf, 14.
 Hipparchus, 58.
 Hippocrates, 55.
Historia Generalis Plantarum, 61.
Historia Naturalis, 59.
Historia Regum Britanniae, 11.
History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, 54, 112.
History of the Parliament of England, The, 23.
 Hitler, Adolf, 103, 142.
 Hobbema, Meindert, 90.
 Hobbes, Thomas, 84, 85, 90, 145.
 Holland, Philemon, 18, 21.
 Homer, 17, 76, 77, 78, 113.
Homer, 76, 77.
 Horace, 26, 81.
Horizon, 103.
Hudibras, 7.
 Hume, David, 37.
 Huntington, Henry of, 9.

- Huxley, Thomas H., 31, 153.
 Hyde, Edward, First Earl of Clarendon, 28.
Hydriotaphia, 26.
Ido, 110.
Iliad (Chapman), 36.
Instauratio Magna (*Novum Organum*), 23.
Interlingua, 110.
 Jane Grey, Lady, 19.
 John of Salisbury, 10.
 Johnson, Samuel, 29, 30, 53, 55, 56, 77, 79, 80, 83, 101, 102.
 Jonson, Ben, 24.
Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, The, 30.
 Joyce, James, 81, 82, 83, 106, 107, 108.
Julius Caesar (Latin), 23.
Julius Caesar, 84.
Jungle Book, The, 95.
 Keats, John, 75, 79, 80, 82, 137.
Kenilworth, 36.
 Kinglsey, Charles, 56.
 Kipling, Rudyard, 95.
 Kirke, Edward, 19, 65.
 Knox, Vicesimus, 78.
Kubla Khan, a Vision in a Dream, 50, 138.
 La Bruyère, Jean de, 53.
 Laird, John, 84.
Lancet, The, 56.
 Landor, Walter Savage, 31, 80.
 Lanfranc of Caen, 9.
 Langland, William, 15, 65.
 Latimer, Hugh, 18, 144.
Latinesce, 110.
 Lavoisier, Antoine Laurent, 57.
 Layamon, 11, 107.
Leviathan, The, or the Matter, Form and Power of a Commonwealth, Ecclesiastical and Civil, 84.
 Linné, Carl von, 61.
 Litany, Latin, 17.
 Locke, John, 28.
Logonomia Anglica, 104.
Logopandecteis, or an Introduction to the Universal Language, 27.
 Longland, John, 18.
 Lucan, 17, 19.
 Lucian, 80.
Lucifer, 75, 76.
 Luther, Martin, 98, 99.
Lycidas, 25.
 Lydgate, John, 15.
Lyrical Ballads, 84.
 Macaulay, Thomas Babington, Lord, 29, 80, 81, 98, 102.
 Malory, Sir Thomas, 65.
Manchester Guardian, The, 94.
Mandeville, Travels of Sir John, 14.
Manductio, or the Leading of Children by the Hand through the Principles of Grammar, 26.
 Manning, Robert, of Brunne, 12.
Manuel des Pêcheurs, 12.
 Map or Mapes, Walter, 10, 107.
 Marie de France, 11.
 Marlowe, Christopher, 19.
Marriage-a-la-Mode, 86, 87.
 Mary I, Queen (Mary Tudor), 19.
 Mason, William, 78.
Mass Observation, 90.
 Masson, David, 26, 31.
Materia Medica, 60.
 May, Thomas, 23.
 McKnight, G. H., 24.
Meaning of Meaning, The, 100.
 Meredith, George, 102.
Metalogicus, 10.
 Metternich, Prince Richard Clemens Lothar Hermann von, 141.
 Mill, John Stuart, 31.
 Milton, John, 19, 25, 26, 31, 34, 75, 76, 78, 82, 105, 107, 111, 112, 128, 137.
Mirour de l'Homme, 15.
 Mistral, Frédéric, 1.
 Moore, Thomas, 78.

- More, Thomas, 17, 18.
 Morris, William, 102.
Morte Arthur, 11.
 Moryson, Fynes, 23.
 Mulcaster, Richard, 20, 21, 31, 105.
Mundus Alter et Idem, 23.
 Murray, Lindley, 30, 31.
 Musgrave, Samuel, 77.
Natural History, 67.
Naufragium Jocularis, 26.
Nero, 81.
New Herbal, 60.
 Newman, Francis, 102.
 Newman, John Henry (Cardinal), 102.
 Newton, Isaac, 27.
New World of English Words, 26.
New Writing, 92.
 Nicolas, J. B., 81.
Nineteenth Century, The, 58.
No-drama, 82.
 North, Thomas, 21.
Novial, 110.
Novum Organum, 23.
Occidental, 110.
Ode to the Passions, 78.
 Ogden, C. K., 100, 101.
 Olivier, Laurence, 89.
On Education, 28.
 Opitz, Martin, 67.
Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection, 90.
O tu severi Religio loci, 29.
 Ovid, 17, 19, 24.
 Owen, John, 23.
 Oxford, University of, 10, 54.
 Palestrina, Giovanni Pierluigi da, 90.
 Palsgrave, John, 40, 47.
Pantochronocanon, 27.
Paracelsus, Philippus Aureolus (Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim), 57.
Paradise Lost, 75.
Paradise Regained, 75.
 Paris, Matthew, 9.
Pasilingua, 110.
Pastoral Symphony, The, 89.
 Pavilion, London, 123.
 Peacham, Henry, 25.
 Peacock, Thomas Love, 78, 79.
 Pearson, K., 62.
 Pecock, Reginald, 16, 105, 144.
 Pericles, 55.
 Philip II, King, 123.
 Phillips, Edward, 26.
Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica, 27.
 Picasso, Pablo, 90.
Piers Plowman, 15, 106.
Pilgrim's Progress, 22.
 Pindar, 26, 78, 80.
Pindaric Odes, 26.
 Pitt, Thomas, 78.
 Pitt, William, First Earl of Chatham, 78.
 Pitt, William (1759-1806), 77.
 Plato, 18, 19, 79, 82.
 Pliny, The Elder, Gaius Plinius Secundus, 59, 60, 61.
Poemata, 21.
Poems of Mr. John Milton, both English and Latin 25.
Poems of Rural Life, 103.
 Polybius, 77.
Polychronicon, 14, 104.
 Pope, Alexander, 55, 76, 77, 78.
 Porson, Richard, 77.
 Priestley, Joseph, 57.
Prometheus Bound, 79.
Prometheus, The Fire-Giver, 81.
Proverbial Philosophy, 99.
 Psalms, 18.
Psalter, Early English, 47, 107.
Pseudodoxia Epidemica, 26, 73.
 Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemaeus), 58.
 Puttenham, George, 19.
 Rabelais, 27.
 Raleigh, Sir Walter, 22.
 Ramsay, Alan, 106.
 Ray, John, 59, 61.
Rehearsal, The, 30.

- Religio Medici*, 26, 74.
Rerum Scoticarum Historia, 18.
Resolution and Independence, 64.
Return of Ulysses, The, 81.
Rhododaphne, 79.
 Richard II, King, 13, 15, 16.
 Richards, I. A., 100.
 Richardson, Ralph, 89.
 Richardson, Samuel, 77.
 Rilke, Rainer Maria, 90.
Rivals, The, 87.
 Robert of Gloucester, 12.
Robinson Crusoe, 28.
Roland, The Song of, 9.
 Rolfe, Frederick William Serafino
 Austin Lewis Mary, 81.
 Rolle, Richard, of Hampole, 12.
 Roughton, F. J. W., 62.
 Rowlands, Samuel, 72, 73.
Royal Society, The, 55, 63.

St. Mark's Gospel, 105.
 Saintsbury, George Edward
 Batemen, 64.
 Salisbury, John of, 10, 14.
Sally in our Alley, 27.
Samson Agonistes, 78.
*Satire Upon Our Ridiculous Imitation
 of the French*, 86.
 Schlegel, August Wilhelm von, 66,
 67, 68, 71, 149, 150, 151.
 Scot, Michael, 10.
 Scott, Sir Walter, 27, 36.
 Scotus, John Duns, 10.
Seasons, The, 129, 130.
 Selden, John, 23, 24.
 Seneca, Lucius Annaeus, 23, 67.
 Shakespeare, William, 19, 24, 34, 38,
 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 75, 84,
 85, 89, 106, 107, 109, 124, 139,
 149, 150, 151.
 Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 66, 79, 82,
 107, 139.
Shepherd's Calender, The, 19, 65.
 Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, 87.
 Shirley, James, 26.
 Sidney, Philip, 19, 67.

 Silviu, 17.
 Sinatra, Frank, 141.
Sir Charles Grandison, 77.
 Skelton, John, 16.
 Smith, Sir Thomas, 18.
 Socrates, 79, 115.
*Some Thoughts Concerning Educa-
 tion*, 28.
 Sophocles, 67, 76, 79.
 Spenser, Edmund, 15, 19, 65, 82,
 107.
 Sterne, Laurence, 107.
 Surrey, Earl of, 19.
 Swift, Jonathan, 55, 107.
 Sylvester, Joshua, 106.

Table Talks (Goethe), 109.
 Taillefer, 8, 9.
Tempest, The, 24.
Temple of Fame, The, 78.
Testament of Beauty, The, 81, 82.
 Theophrastus of Eresos, 60.
Thesaurus, 76.
 Thomson, James, 120, 129, 130.
Through the Looking-Glass, 129.
 Tieck, Ludwig, 66, 67.
Times, The, 31, 93, 94.
 Tindale, William, 18, 22.
Tirocinium, 109.
 Toscanini, Arturo, 86.
Towneley Mysteries, 38.
Toxophilus, 20.
Travels, 23.
 Trevisa, John, 14, 104, 105.
Trissotetras, 27.
Troilus and Cressida, 29.
 Tupper, Martin Farquhar, 99.
 Turner, William, 60.

Ulysses, 108.
 Umar Khaiyam, 81.
 United Nations, 133.
 Urquhart, Sir Thomas, 27.
Utopia, 17.

 Varro, 18.
 Virgil, 18, 76, 78, 81, 82, 113.

- Volapük*, 110.
 Vondel, Joost van den, 75, 76.
Voyage to Cathay, 22.
Vox Clamantis, 15.

 Wace, 11.
 Wagner, Richard, 86.
 Walpole, Horace, Earl of Orford,
 77, 102.
 Ward, William, 30.
 Warton, Joseph, 78.
Water-Babies, The, 56
Way Made Plain to the Latin Tongue,
 The, 26.

 Wells, Herbert George, 100.
 Wells, Orson, 84.
 Westminster, First Statute of, 13.
William and the Were Wolf, 11.
 William of Malmesbury, 9.
 William the Conqueror, 8, 9, 44, 49.
 Willoughby, Sir Hugh, 22.
 Willoughby, Francis, 59.
 Wilson, Dr. Thomas, 17, 20.
Winter's Tale, The, 124.
 Wolsey, Cardinal, 17.
 Woodhouse, S. C., 112.
 Wordsworth, William, 64, 65, 79,
 80, 81, 82.
 Wyclif, John, 12, 105, 144.

